

A
PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
SETTLEMENTS AND TRADE
OF THE
E U R O P E A N S
IN THE
EAST AND WEST INDIES.

Translated from the French of the ABBÉ RAYNAL,
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PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL
H I S T O R Y
 OF THE
SETTLEMENTS AND TRADE
 OF THE
EUROPEANS
 IN THE
EAST AND WEST INDIES.

B O O K I.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

NO event has been so interesting to mankind in general, and to the inhabitants of Europe in particular, as the discovery of the new world, and the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope. It gave rise to a revolution in the commerce, and in the power of nations; and in the manners, industry, and government of the whole world. At this period, new connections were formed by the inhabitants of the most distant regions, for the supply of wants they had never before experienced. The productions of climates situated under the equator, were consumed in countries bordering on the pole; the industry of the north was transplanted to the south; and the inhabitants of the west were clothed with the manufac-

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B

tures

B O O K I.

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tures of the east; a general intercourse of opinions, laws and customs, diseases and remedies, virtues and vices, was established among men.

EVERY thing has changed, and must change again. But it is a question, whether the revolutions that are passed, or those which must hereafter take place, have been, or can be of any utility to the human race? Will they ever add to the tranquillity, the happiness, and the pleasures of mankind? Can they improve our present state, or do they only change it?

THE Europeans have founded colonies in all parts, but are they acquainted with the principles on which they ought to be formed? They have established a commerce of exchange, of the productions of the earth and of manufactures. This commerce is transferred from one people to another. Can we not discover by what means, and in what situations this has been effected? Since America and the passage by the Cape has been known, some nations that were of no consequence are become powerful: others, that were the terror of Europe, have lost their authority. How has the condition of these several people been affected by these discoveries? How comes it to pass that those to whom Nature has been most liberal, are not always the richest and most flourishing? To throw some light on these important questions, we must take a view of the state of Europe before these discoveries were made; we must trace circumstantially the events they have given rise to; and conclude with examining it, as it presents itself at this day.

THE commercial states have civilized all others. The Phœnicians, whose extent of country and influence were extremely limited, acquired by their genius for naval enterprises, an importance which ranked them foremost in the history of the antient nations.

THEY



THEY are mentioned by writers of every class. They were known to the most distant climes, and their fame has been transmitted to succeeding ages. BOOK
1.

SITUATED on a barren coast, separated from the continent by the Mediterranean on the one side, and the mountains of Libanus on the other; they seem to have been destined by Nature for the dominion of the sea. Fishing taught them the art of navigation, and furnished them with the purple dye which they extracted from the murex: at the same time the sea-land led them to discover the secret of making glass. Happy in possessing so few natural advantages, since the want of these awakened that spirit of invention and industry, which is the parent of arts and opulence!

IT must be confessed, that the situation of the Phœnicians was admirably adapted to extend their commerce to every part of the world. By inhabiting, as it were, the confines of Africa, Asia, and Europe, if they could not unite the inhabitants of the globe in one common interest, they at least had it in their power, by a commercial intercourse, to communicate to every nation the enjoyments of all climates. But the antients whom we have so often excelled, though we have derived much useful knowledge from them, had not means sufficient to enable to establish an universal commerce. The Phœnicians had no shipping except gallies; they only carried on a coasting trade, and their sailing was confined to the Mediterranean. Though this state was the model upon which other maritime powers were formed, it is not so easy to determine what they have, as what they might have performed. We may form a conjecture of their population by their colonies. It is said that their numbers extended along the coasts of the Mediterranean, particularly on the shores of Africa.

TYRE or Sidon, the queen of the ocean, gave birth to Carthage. While the opulence of Tyre invited tyrants to rivet its fetters, Carthage, the offspring of Tyre, notwithstanding its riches, had this happy advantage over the parent state, that it enjoyed its liberty. It commanded the coasts of Africa, and had possession of Spain, which in those days was the richest country in Europe, and famous for gold and silver mines of its own, though destined, at the expence of so much bloodshed, to acquire others in the new world.

HAD the Roman power never existed, Carthage would in all probability have been nothing more than a commercial state; but the ambition of one nation excited all the rest to relinquish the arts of commerce for those of war, and either to conquer or to perish. Carthage, after a long and glorious contest for the empire of the world, was forced to submit to the all-subduing genius of Rome. The subversion of a republic, which gloried in its industry, and owed its power to its skill in useful arts, was, perhaps, a misfortune to Europe, and to the world in general.

GREECE, intersected every where by seas, must necessarily flourish by commerce. Its position in the Archipelago, and its distance from any large continent, seemed to make it unlikely that it should either conquer or be conquered. Situated between Asia and Europe, it contributed to civilize both the one and the other, and enjoyed a deserved share of prosperity, as the reward of its services. As almost all the Greeks came either from Egypt or Phœnicia, they brought along with them the knowledge and industry of those countries; but of all the Asiatic colonies, those were the most flourishing and happy, that had a turn for commerce.

ATHENS employed her first ships either in carrying on a trade with Asia, or in planting as many colonies

as

as Greece in her infancy might have received from thence : but these emigrations involved them in wars. The Persians, living under an arbitrary government, would not even suffer any free people to settle on the confines of the sea ; and the Satraps inculcated into the great king, the doctrine of universal slavery. This was the source of all the wars in Asia Minor, where the Athenians found means to make all the insular and maritime states either their allies or their subjects. Athens enlarged her commerce by her victories, and her power by her commerce. All the arts made their appearance in Greece at the same time, together with the luxury of Asia.

COMMERCE, agriculture, and the means of population, were introduced into Sicily by the Greeks and the Carthaginians. Rome, who beheld their progress with a jealous eye, seized upon that island which was destined to supply it with subsistence ; and having driven out the two nations that contended for sovereignty of it, attacked first one, and then the other. From the moment that Carthage was destroyed, Greece trembled for her fate. But it was Alexander who marked the way for the Romans ; nor was it possible, perhaps, that the Greeks could have been subdued by a foreign power, if they had not first conquered each other. Commerce is finally destroyed by the riches it accumulates, as power is by its own conquests ; and when the commerce of the Greeks had failed in the Mediterranean, it no longer subsisted in any part of the known world.

THE Greeks, by improving upon all the sciences and arts they had received from the Egyptians and Tyrians, elevated human reason to a high degree of perfection : but it has been reduced so low by the subsequent revolutions of empires, that in all probability it will never rise again to the same standard. Their
admirable

admirable institutions were superior to the best we have at this day. The plan upon which they founded their colonies does honour to their humanity. As all the arts owed to them their rise, and perfection, they did not survive the fate of their protectors: it is evident from some works of Xenophon, that the Greeks were better acquainted with the principles of trade, than most modern nations are at present.

If we consider that the Europeans have the advantage of all the knowledge of the Greeks, that their commerce is infinitely more extensive, that since the improvements in navigation, their ideas are directed to greater, and more various objects; it is astonishing that they should not have the most palpable superiority over them. But it must be observed, that when these people arrived at the knowledge of the arts and of trade, they were just produced as it were from the hands of nature, and had all the powers necessary to improve the talents she had given them: whereas the European nations had the misfortune to be restrained by laws, by government, and by an exclusive and imperious religion. In Greece the arts of trade met with men, in Europe with slaves. Whenever the absurdities of our institutions have been pointed out, we have taken pains to correct them, without ever daring totally to overthrow the edifice. We have remedied some abuses, by introducing others; and, in our efforts to support, reform and palliate, we have adopted more contradictions and absurdities in our manners, than are to be found among the most barbarous people. For this reason, if the arts should ever gain admission among the Tartars and Iroquois, they will make an infinitely more rapid progress among them, than they can ever do in Russia and Poland.

THE Romans, formed for conquest, though they dazzled the world with an appearance of grandeur,
fell

fell short of the Greeks in their improvements in philosophy, and the arts. They promoted an intercourse between different nations, not by uniting them by the ties of commerce, but by imposing upon them the same yoke of subordination. They ravaged the globe, which, when reduced to subjection, they left in a state rather of lethargy than tranquillity. Their despotism and military government oppressed the people, extinguished the powers of genius, and degraded the human race.

CONSTANTINE passed two laws, which, though Montesquieu has not ventured to reckon them among the causes of the declension of the empire, threw every thing into still greater disorder. The first, dictated by imprudence and fanaticism, though it appeared to be the effect of humanity, affords a proof that great innovations are often attended with great danger; and that the original rights of mankind cannot always be made the standard of government. By this law, all slaves who should embrace christianity, were allowed their freedom. Thus, while those who had hitherto dragged on a precarious existence were reinstated in their primitive rights, the state was weakened; because the proprietors of large tracts of land were deprived of the number of hands necessary for their improvement, and were for some time reduced to the extremest indigence. On the other hand, the new converts, having no property themselves, or any certain means of subsistence, were not in a condition to assist the government, in repairing the injury it had done to their masters. It is equally impossible that they should have any attachment to a state which did not afford them subsistence, or to a religion, which the irresistible desire of liberty alone induced them to embrace. By another edict, paganism was prohibited throughout the whole empire; and thus these extensive dominions were

were inhabited by men, whose attachment to each other, and to the state, was no longer secured by the solemn sanctions of religion: having no priests, no temples, no public morals, they had no motives to excite them to repel an enemy who should attack a government with which they were no longer connected.

THE inhabitants of the north, therefore, when they fell upon the empire, found every thing ready to favour their invasion. Harassed in Poland and in Germany by some nations who had migrated from Great Tartary, they took a temporary possession of certain provinces already ruined, till they were expelled by succeeding conquerors of a still more ferocious disposition than themselves. When these barbarians determined to settle in the regions they had laid waste, they divided countries which the Romans had formerly united. From that moment, all communication between those states established by accident, necessity or caprice, was at an end. The swarms of pirates that infested the seas, together with the fierce disposition of the inhabitants of the frontiers, discouraged every connection that mutual convenience might render necessary. The subjects of each state, however small in extent, were separated from each other by insurmountable obstacles; for the banditti who infested the roads, made a journey of any length a dangerous expedition. The nations of Europe, thus plunged a second time by slavery and despair into that state of insensibility and indolence, which must for many ages have been the state of the human race, derived little advantage from the fertility of their soil; and their industry was exhausted in the employments of a savage life; tracts of country at no great distance, were to them of as little importance, as if they had not existed: nor had they any further knowledge of their neighbours, than as they happened to excite their fears or their enmity.

THE

THE accounts given by some authors of the wealth and splendour of the seventh century, are as fabulous as all the other miraculous things we read of in the history of those times. The cloathing then in use was of skin and coarse woollen, the conveniences of life were not known; buildings indeed were erected with strength and solidity, but which conveyed no idea, either of the affluence or taste of the age. Neither much money, nor much knowledge of the arts is required to pile up heaps of stone by the hands of slaves. One incontestible proof of the indigence of the people was, that taxes were levied in kind; and that even the contributions which the inferior clergy paid to their superiors consisted of provisions.

THE superstition that prevailed increased the general darkness. In the eighth, and the beginning of the ninth century, Rome, no longer the capital of the masters of the universe, attempted to exercise her authority as before, in deposing or making kings. Deprived of inhabitants and soldiers, by dint of opinions and religious tenets alone, she aspired to universal monarchy. By her management princes were excited to take up arms against each other, people against their kings, and kings against their people. All merit consisted in making war, and all virtue in obeying the church. The dignity of monarchs was degraded by the claims of Rome, which inspired a contempt for princes, without exciting the love of liberty. Literature was then comprised in a few absurd romances, and some melancholy tales, the offspring of cloistered indolence. This contributed to entertain that dejection of spirit, and that propensity to the marvellous, so favourable to the interests of superstition.

THE face of the globe was again changed by two other nations. A people pouring in from Scandinavia and the Cimbrian Chersonesus spread themselves to the

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I.

the north of Europe, which on the southern side was harassed by the Arabs. The former were disciples of Wodin, the latter of Mohammed; men who had equally diffused the fanaticism of conquest with that of religion. Charlemagne subdued one of these nations, and maintained his ground against the other. These inhabitants of the north, called Saxons or Normans, were indigent, ill armed, and undisciplined, of savage manners, and driven to combat and to death by misery and superstition. Charlemagne was desirous of compelling them to change that religion which rendered them so terrible, for another which would dispose them to obedience. He was obliged to wade through seas of blood, and the cross was erected on heaps of slain. He was less successful against the Arabs, conquerors of Asia, Africa and Spain, and could not gain a footing beyond the Pyrenean mountains.

THE necessity of repulsing the Arabs, but especially the Normans, occasioned the revival of naval skill in Europe. Charlemagne in France, Alfred the Great in England, and some cities of Italy, built ships; and these first attempts towards navigation revived for a short time maritime commerce. Charlemagne established great fairs, the principal of which was at Aix-la-Chapelle. This is the method of trading among people where commerce is still in its infancy.

THE Arabs, however, laid the foundations of the most extensive commerce that had been known since the times of Athens and Carthage. It is true, this was not so much owing to the lights of cultivated reason, and to the progress of a good administration, as to the extent of their power, and the nature of the country they possessed. Masters of Spain, of Africa, of Asia Minor, of Persia, and part of India, they introduced reciprocal exchanges, from one region to another, of the commodities in different parts of their vast empire.

They

They extended themselves gradually as far as the Moluccas and to China, sometimes as traders, sometimes as missionaries, frequently as conquerors.

BOOK

I.

SOON after this, the Venetians, Genoese and Arabs of Barcelona went to Alexandria to buy up the merchandise of Africa and India, and disposed of it in Europe. The Arabs, enriched by commerce, and sated with conquest, were no longer the same people who burnt the Alexandrian library. They cultivated the arts and polite literature, and are distinguished from other conquering nations by their improvements of the reason and industry of men. To them we owe the sciences of algebra and chymistry, new discoveries in astronomy, new improvements in mechanics and medicine, unknown to the ancients. But among the fine arts, poetry is the only one they have cultivated with success.

AT the same period, the subjects of the Greek empire imitated the manufactures of Asia; and had, through various channels, monopolized the riches of India. But the advantages they derived from both these circumstances, could not survive the fate of their empire; which had nothing to oppose to the heroic and daring enthusiasm of the Arabs, but the weak and unmanly weapons of scholastic logic, and the controversial armour of monks; who had gained such an ascendant, that the Emperor used to ask God pardon for the time he employed in affairs of state. Painting and sculpture were no longer known, and it was matter of eternal dispute whether images ought, or ought not, to be worshipped. The Greeks, surrounded by the ocean, and in possession of several islands, had yet no maritime forces; they defended themselves against the naval power of Egypt and of the Saracens by wild fire; the vain and precarious defence of a degenerate people. Constantinople, not being in a condition to protect

protect her maritime trade at a distance, resigned it to the Genoese, who seized upon Caffa, which they made a flourishing city.

THE nobility of Europe acquired a tincture of the manners of the Greeks and Arabs in their ridiculous expeditions of the crusades. They became acquainted with their arts and their luxury; which were afterwards almost necessary to their happiness. The Venetians had a more extensive demand for the goods they brought from the east; and the Arabs themselves carried some of them into France, England, and even into Germany.

THESE powers had at that period neither shipping nor manufactures: they laid restraints upon commerce, and the character of a merchant was held in contempt. This useful set of men were never respected among the Romans. They treated their merchants with as much contempt as their players, courtesans, bastards, slaves and gladiators. The political system, established throughout Europe by the power and ignorance of the northern nations, must necessarily have confirmed a prejudice which owed its rise to a barbarous pride. Our ancestors had the absurdity to adopt, as the basis of their government, a principle destructive of all society; a contempt for useful labour. The only persons held in any degree of estimation were the lords of manors, or such as had distinguished themselves in battle. The nobles, it is well known, were so many petty sovereigns who abused their own power, and opposed that of the monarch. The barons were fond of parade, avaricious, whimsical and poor. Sometimes they invited the merchants into their little states, and at others, extorted money from them. In these barbarous times were established the several duties of tolls, of export and import, of passage, of quarters, of escheat, and other oppressions without number,

All

All the bridges and highways were opened or stopped up at the will of the prince or his vassals. The first elements of commerce were so totally unknown, that it was customary to fix the price of commodities. The merchants were often pillaged, and always ill paid by the knights and barons. Trade was carried on in caravans or companies, which went armed to the places where the fairs were kept. At these marts the merchants omitted nothing that might engage the favour of the people. They were generally accompanied by jugglers, musicians and buffoons. As there were then no large towns, and neither public spectacles and meetings, nor the sedentary pleasures of private society were known, the fair time was the season for diversions, which, degenerating into dissoluteness, gave a sanction to the invectives and severities of the clergy. The traders were frequently excommunicated. The people held those strangers in abhorrence, who supplied their tyrants with superfluities, and associated with men, whose manners were so repugnant to their prejudices and rude austerity of life. The Jews, who soon engaged in all the branches of commerce, did not bring it into repute. They were then considered in the same light throughout all Europe, as they are at this day in Poland and Turkey. As their fortunes were increasing every day, they were enabled to advance money to merchants and tradesmen; for which they demanded interest equivalent to the risque they ran in vesting their capital in other hands. The schoolmen were violent in opposing this necessary measure, which their rude prejudices had taught them to condemn. This theological determination of a point of a civil and political nature, was attended with strange consequences. The magistrates, blinded by an authority, against even the unjust exercise of which no one dared to appeal, denounced sentence of confiscation and ignominious

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I.

ignominious penalties against usury, which, in those dark ages, the laws did not distinguish from the most moderate interest. It was at this juncture, that to make themselves amends for the dangers and mortifications they were exposed to in carrying on a commerce, which was looked upon as odious and unlawful, the Jews abandoned themselves to the most excessive rapacity. They were held in universal detestation. Persecuted, pillaged, and proscribed, they invented bills of exchange, which secured the remains of their fortunes. The clergy declared the exchange usurious, but it was of too great utility to be abolished. One of the effects it produced was to make the merchants more independent of the prince, who treated them better, apprehending that they might transport their riches into foreign countries.

THE Italians, who are better known by the name of Lombards, were the first who took advantage of this early change of ideas. They formed small communities, and procured the protection of some states, who, on their account, dispensed with the laws against strangers, which had been made in the barbarous ages. By virtue of this indulgence, they became agents for all the southern parts of Europe.

THE inhabitants of the north began likewise to awake from their lethargy: but their recovery was later, and effected with greater difficulty. Hamburgh and Lubec having attempted to open a trade in the Baltic, were obliged to unite for their mutual defence against the pirates who infested those latitudes. The success of this little combination encouraged other towns to enter into the confederacy; in a short time, this was composed of fourscore cities, which had either obtained or purchased the privilege of being governed by their own laws, and formed a line of communication from the Baltic to the Rhine. This association,

ciation, which was the first modern one that adopted a regular system of commerce, supplied the Lombards with naval stores and other merchandise of the north, in exchange for the produce of Asia, Italy, and the other southern countries.

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I.

FLANDERS was the scene of these happy transactions; but it was not to its situation alone that it owed a distinction so favourable to its interests: this must likewise be attributed to its numerous manufactures of fine cloth, and particularly of tapestry; which last affords a convincing proof how little the arts of drawing and perspective were then known. By these advantageous circumstances, the Low-Countries became the richest, the most populous, and the best cultivated part of Europe.

THE flourishing condition of the inhabitants of Flanders, the Hanse Towns, and some republics, who owed their prosperity to their freedom, engaged the attention of most of the reigning monarchs, in whose dominions the rights of citizens had hitherto been confined to the nobility and clergy: the rest of their subjects were slaves. But as soon as the cities were declared free, and had large immunities granted them, the merchants and mechanics entered into associations, which rose in estimation as they acquired riches. The sovereigns opposed these associations to the barons. Thus anarchy and feudal tyranny gradually decreased. The tradesmen became citizens, and the third state was restored to the privilege of being admitted to the national assembly.

MONTESQUIEU attributes to Christianity the honour of having abolished slavery; but we venture to differ from him. When industry and riches prevailed among the people, the princes began to hold them in some estimation; when the sovereign could avail himself of the riches of the people to gain advantages over

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I.

over the barons, laws were framed to put the people in a better condition. It was through that sound policy, which commerce always introduces, and not through the spirit of the Christian Religion, that kings were induced to bestow freedom upon the slaves of their vassals, because those slaves, when made free, became subjects. It is true, that Pope Alexander III. declared that Christians were to be exempt from servitude; but this declaration was made merely to please the kings of France and England, who were desirous of humbling their vassals.

In Italy one might perceive the dawning of more prosperous days. The republics of Pisa, Genoa and Florence, were established on the wisest principles; the factions of the Guelphs and Gibbelines, which had for so many ages laid waste these delightful countries, were at length appeased; trade flourished, and consequently learning would soon be introduced. Venice was in the height of its glory; its navy, which eclipsed that of its neighbours, checked the progress of the maritime power of the Mammelucs, and the Turks; in commerce it was superior to all the European states taken together; its inhabitants were numerous, and its riches immense; the revenues were well managed, and the people were content; the republic borrowed money of the richer subjects, from motives not of necessity, but of policy. The Venetians were the first people who found out the secret of attaching rich individuals to the interest of government, by inviting them to vest some part of their fortune in the public funds. At Venice there were manufactures of silk, gold and silver; it supplied foreigners with ships: its works in gold and silver were the best, and almost the only ones of that time. The inhabitants were even accused of extravagance in having gold and silver plate, and other utensils of the same

same materials. They were not, however, without sumptuary laws; but these laid no restraint on a species of luxury by which the sums expended were preserved to the state. The noblemen united œconomy with splendour; the opulence of Venice revived the architecture of Athens, and upon the whole there was magnificence as well as elegance in their luxury; the people were ignorant, but the nobles were enlightened; the government opposed the attempts of the popes with firmness and prudence: *Siamo Veneziani, poi Christiani*, said one of their senators, who expressed in these words the sense of the whole senate; for at that early period they debased the priesthood, though they should rather have made it useful to morality; which, however, was more rigid and pure among the Venetians than among the other people of Italy. Their troops were very different from those miserable *Condottieri*, whose name was so much more terrible than their arms. Venice was the seat of politeness; and society was then under less restraint from the spies of government, than it has been since the republic began to be jealous of the power of its neighbours, and to be diffident of its own strength.

IN the fifteenth century, Italy far surpassed the other states of Europe. Religious zeal, which supplied the place of merit, and occasioned so many trifling ceremonies and cruel oppressions, was, however, the means of releasing Spain from the Arabian yoke; its several provinces had lately been united by the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, and the conquest of Granada; and its power was even equal to that of France. The fine wool of Castile and Leon was manufactured at Segovia, and their cloths were sold all over Europe, and even in Asia; the perpetual efforts the Spaniards were obliged to make to preserve their liberty, inspired them with resolution and confidence; their successes

had elevated their minds, and, being ignorant, they abandoned themselves to all the enthusiasm of chivalry and religion³. Confined to a peninsula, and having no immediate intercourse with other nations, they entertained that contempt for them, which, either among individuals or communities, is usually the characteristic of ignorance. They were the only people that maintained a standing body of infantry, which was excellent. As the Spaniards for many ages had been involved in war, their soldiery was indisputably superior to that of the other states of Europe.

THE Portuguese had much the same dispositions; but their monarchy was better regulated than that of Castile, and the administration was conducted with more ease after the reduction of the Moors by the conquest of Algarva.

IN France, Lewis XI. had just lowered the power of the great vassals, raised that of the magistracy, and made the nobles subject to the laws. The people of France growing less dependent on their lords, must necessarily become, in a short time, more industrious, more active, and more respectable; but industry and commerce could not flourish on a sudden. Reason must of course make but a slow progress in the midst of those commotions which were still excited by the great, and under the reign of a prince devoted to the most abominable superstition. The barons were distinguished only by their savage haughtiness; their revenues were scarce sufficient to entertain in their suite a train of gentlemen without employment, who defended them against their sovereign and the laws. The expences of their table were immoderate; and this savage luxury, of which there are still too many remains, afforded no encouragement to any of the useful arts. But neither the manners nor the language of those times partook of that decency which distinguishes

guishes the superior rank of citizens, and procures them respect from the rest. Notwithstanding the courtesy enjoined to the knights, coarse and rough manners still prevailed among the great; the nation had then the same character of inconstitence it has since preserved, and which a nation will ever have, whose morals and customs are not conformable to the laws. The councils issued innumerable, and frequently contradictory edicts, but the prince readily dispensed with the observance of them. By this easy disposition of the sovereign, the inconveniences which would have arisen from a multitude of laws inconsiderately made by the French ministry, have been happily prevented.

ENGLAND, less opulent, and less industrious than France, was composed of insolent barons, despotic bishops, and a people who were tired of their yoke; a certain restless disposition prevailed in the nation, which must necessarily sooner or later introduce liberty. This character owed its rise to the absurd tyranny of William the Conqueror, and the cruel disposition of several of his successors. The intolerable abuse of power had made the English extremely jealous of their sovereigns; the very name of king carried with it the idea of terror; and these sentiments, transmitted from father to son, afterwards laid the foundations of that form of government they now have the happiness to enjoy. The long contention between the houses of York and Lancaster, while it raised a martial spirit and an impatience of slavery, involved the nation, at the same time, in poverty and confusion. The English wool was then manufactured in Flanders, and was exported, as well as its lead and tin, in vessels belonging to the Hanse Towns. The principles of navigation, of internal policy, jurisprudence, luxury, and the fine arts were entirely un-

known in England; at the same time that it was overburthened with a multitude of rich covents and hospitals. These convents were the usual resort of the distressed nobles, as the hospitals were of the common people; idleness and barbarous manners were encouraged by these superstitious institutions.

GERMANY, which had long been harassed by quarrels between the emperors and the popes, and by intestine wars, had at this time begun to enjoy a state of tranquillity; order had taken place of anarchy, and the inhabitants of this extensive country, who, though strangers to wealth and commerce, were versed in the arts of war and agriculture, had nothing to fear from their neighbours, neither could they be formidable to them. The feudal system, so fatal to mankind in other countries, here assumed a milder aspect; the princes presiding over this vast extent of territory, generally speaking, governed their respective states with a good deal of moderation; they seldom abused their authority, and if the peaceable possession of their estates could compensate the want of liberty, the Germans were happy; commerce and industry were entirely confined to the free cities, and to the towns included in the Hanseatic league; the mines of Hanover and Saxony were not yet discovered; silver was scarce; the farmer sold a few horses to strangers, nor had the princes yet introduced the traffic of the human species; the expences of the table, and a variety of equipages were the only articles of luxury; the nobles and the clergy intoxicated themselves, without disturbing the government; it was with some difficulty that the gentry were dissuaded from amusing themselves with robbing on the highways; their manners were savage, and during the two succeeding centuries the German troops were more distinguished by their cruelties than by their discipline and bravery.

THE

THE northern countries had made less progress than Germany. Oppressed by the nobles and priests, the inhabitants no longer retained that enthusiastic love of glory with which the religion of Wodin had formerly inspired them; nor were they yet acquainted with those wise institutions which some of them have since borrowed from better forms of government. Their power was so inconsiderable, that a single Hanse Town was capable of intimidating the three potentates of the north. They recovered their national importance after the reformation, and under the auspices of Frederic and Gustavus Vasa.

THE Turks were strangers to the science of government: they had no knowledge of the arts, nor taste for commerce: but the Janissaries were the best troops in the world. These attendants of a despot whom they kept in awe, at the same time that they insured respect to him whom they placed upon the throne or strangled at pleasure, had at that time some great men for their leaders. They subverted the empire of the Greeks, who were infatuated with theology, and stupified by superstition. Some of the inhabitants of this mild climate, who cultivated literature and the arts, abandoned their country after it was subdued, and took refuge in Italy; whither they were followed by artists and traders. Tranquillity, peace, prosperity, the ambition of excelling in every accomplishment, and the desire of new pleasures, which is inspired by good governments, favoured the revival of letters in the country of the antient Romans; and it was from the Greeks that the Italians derived a better knowledge of good models, and a taste for antiquity. The art of printing was invented; and though for a long time the discovery was of little use while the people continued in a state of poverty and indolence, yet when commerce and the arts had made some progress,

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progress, books became more common. A love of study prevailed, and the antients were universally admired : but they had no rivals except in Italy.

ROME, which in every century has almost always assumed a character the best adapted to the present moment, seemed disposed no longer to encourage that ignorance which had so long and so materially been subservient to her interests. She protected polite literature, and such of the arts as depended more on imagination than reason. The most ignorant priest is well aware, that representations of a terrible divinity, mortification, self-denial, austerity, melancholy and terror, are so many expedients to gain an ascendant over the minds of men, by engaging them deeply in religious matters. But there are times when these expedients have but little effect. Men who have grown rich in peaceful states, are fond of enjoying themselves ; they dislike the dull road of life, and are eager in the pursuit of pleasures. When fairs began to be established, with entertainments of sports, dancing, and other recreations, the clergy, who observed, that the love of festivity made the people less religious, prohibited these sports, and excommunicated those who bore a part in them. But finding that no regard was paid to their censures, they changed their plan, and determined to take these amusements into their own hands. This was the origin of sacred comedy. The death of St. Catherine, acted by the monks of St. Denys, rivalled the success of the players. Music was introduced into the churches ; and even farces were exhibited there. The festivals called *la Fête des foux & de L'Ane, & des Innocens*, proved as entertaining to the people as the farces that were acted in the public places. It often happened, that attracted by the mere love of amusement, they left the Egyptian dances to join in the procession for the festival of St. John.

John. As the Italians improved in politeness, their pleasures became more refined; and the decency that was introduced into their common feasts and public entertainments, afforded less pretence for the censures of the priests, and procured them a toleration. The merit of being able to read had been long confined to this class of men: but when it became a more general accomplishment, they could no longer avail themselves of this distinction: and finding that learning was the road to fame, they were ambitious of shining in literary pursuits. The popes, who enjoyed an opulent and peaceful sovereignty in the voluptuous region of Italy, laid aside their austerities. Their court became an agreeable one. The encouragement of literature was considered as a new expedient to establish their authority over the minds of men. Genius was cherished, and marks of honour were conferred upon great artists. Raphael died but a short time before he was to have been created a cardinal; and Petrarch had the honours of a triumph. As little conformable as this good taste, these fine arts, and new amusements, may appear to the spirit of the gospel, they were evidently calculated to promote the interest of the papal throne. The belles-lettres serve to ornament this ecclesiastical structure; but philosophy demolishes it. Thus while the church of Rome favoured polite literature and the fine arts, it discountenanced the severer sciences. The poets were crowned with laurel; but the philosophers were persecuted. Galileo from his prison might have beheld Tasso carried in triumph to the capitol, if those men of great genius had been cotemporaries.

It was now time that philosophy and learning should lend their support to morality and reason. The church of Rome had taken all imaginable pains to subvert those principles of justice which nature had implanted

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implanted in all mankind. The single maxim, that the pope had a right to the sovereignty of all empires, sapped the foundation of all society and public virtue: this maxim, however, had for a long time prevailed, together with that horrid doctrine, which not only permitted but enjoined hatred and persecution towards all whose religious opinions were not agreeable to those of the Romish church. Indulgences, a species of expiation which might be purchased for all crimes, or if any thing can be still more monstrous, for crimes to be committed in future; dispensations for breaking faith with the enemies of the pontiff, though they were of the same religion; that article of belief which teaches, that the merit of the just may be transferred to the wicked; vices of all kinds exemplified in the lives of the popes, and other religious persons, who ought to have been models to the people; above all, that greatest reproach to humanity, the inquisition: all these horrid enormities made Europe appear to be rather the haunt of tygers and serpents, than a vast country inhabited or cultivated by men.

SUCH was the situation of Europe, when the Portuguese monarch, at the head of an active, generous and intelligent people, surrounded by neighbours who still preyed upon each other, formed a plan of extending his dominions by sea and land.

The first expeditions of the Portuguese; their arrival in India.

JOHN I. had several sons, who, being ambitious of signalizing themselves, undertook, at first, some expeditions to Barbary. Henry, whose genius was superior to that of the others, resolved to make discoveries in the west. This young prince availed himself of the little knowledge of astronomy which was preserved among the Arabs. At Sagrés, a city of Algarva, he established an observatory, and made it the place of education for all the nobility who composed his train; he had a considerable share in the invention of the

Astrolabe,

Astrolabe, and was the first who was sensible of the advantages that might be drawn from the compass, which though already known in Europe, had never been applied to the purposes of navigation.

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THE pilots, who studied under his direction, discovered Madeira in the year 1418. Two years after this, one of his ships took possession of the Canaries; he doubled the Cape of Sierra-Leona, and the river Zara led him into the interior parts of Africa as far as Congo. He made an easy conquest of those countries, and established an advantageous commerce. The inconsiderable nations who inhabited those parts, being separated from each other by impassible deserts, were strangers both to the value of their riches, and the art of defending themselves. These voyages raised great expectations; the revenues that might in future arise from the coast of Guinea, were farmed. An instance of avidity so premature, shews, that the princes, who undertook these discoveries, were more solicitous to increase their finances, than to promote the commerce of their subjects.

IN the reign of John II. an intelligent prince, who first declared Lisbon a free port, and under whose auspices a new method was adopted of applying astronomy to navigation, some of his subjects, whom he sent out upon an expedition, doubled the Cape which is at the extremity of Africa. The Cape was then called the Cape of Storms; but the prince, who foresaw that it would open a passage to India, gave it the name of the Cape of Good Hope.

EMANUEL pursued the plan marked out by his predecessors. In 1497 he equipped a fleet consisting of four ships, and gave command of it to *Vasco de Gama*. This admiral, having weathered several storms in his cruise along the eastern coasts of Africa, and attempted seas before unknown, landed at length in Indostan, after a voyage of thirteen months.

ASIA,

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A geogra-
phical de-
scription of
Asia.

ASIA, of which Indostan is one of the richest parts, is a vast continent, lying, according to the observations of the Russians, the truth of which has been justly doubted, between the 43d and the 207th degree of longitude. It extends, between the two poles, from the 77th degree of northern to the 10th degree of southern latitude. That part of this large continent which is situated in the temperate zone, between the 35th and the 50th degree of latitude, appears to be higher than the rest: it is bordered both towards the north and south by two vast chains of mountains, which run almost from the western extremity of Asia Minor and the coasts of the black sea, to the ocean that washes the coasts of China and Tartary towards the east. These two chains are united by other intermediate chains, in a direction from south to north; they branch out towards the northern, the Indian, and eastern oceans, and appear like so many bulwarks raised between the beds of the large rivers which roll through these immense regions.

SUCH is the great basis which nature has raised to support the fabric of Asia. In the inland parts of this vast country, the earth, parched by the heat of the sun, becomes so light, that it is carried about by the winds; there is not the least appearance either of stone or marble; no petrified shells, or other fossils, are to be found; the beds of minerals lie upon the surface. All these phenomena, joined to the observations made with the barometer, are proofs of the great elevation of the central part of Asia, to which the moderns have given the name of the less Bucharina.

FROM these heights, which form a kind of girdle, surrounding this immense and unfruitful region, several large streams arise, that run in different channels. The fragments of barren earth, which are perpetually carried down by these rivers towards the several extre-

mities

mities of Asia, form so many barriers against the sea, and promise a stability and duration to this continent, superior to that of any other. Perhaps it will be its fate to see the rest repeatedly buried under the waters, before it suffers any encroachment itself.

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THE Caspian sea alone has preserved its station within the limits of this vast tract of land, which has been emerging from the deep through a series of ages. It is undoubtedly the reservoir of those large rivers that fall into it, and possibly may also have some small communication, by subterraneous passages, with the ocean and the Mediterranean; if it be true, as it appears to be from observations made with the barometer at Astracan, that its surface is below the level of both those seas.

THE frozen ocean, which extends along the northern coasts of Siberia, renders them inaccessible, if we may believe the accounts given by the Russians. They tell us, that it is in vain to expect to find a new passage by this sea from Europe to America; and that the ice will always prevent the doubling of the Cape of Schaginskoi, which separates the old from the new world, though this passage has once been crossed. But the Russians are probably not sincere enough, or not sufficiently informed, to deserve entire credit; and either tell us more or less than the truth.

THE Indian ocean, which bears towards the south of Asia, is divided from the great south sea by a chain of mountains, which begins at the island of Madagascar, and extending under water as far as Sumatra, (as is evident from the shallows and rocks which are scattered in those parts) unites again at Van Diemen's Land and New Guinea. M. Buache, a geographer, who has examined the earth as a natural philosopher, and has laid down a chart of the world according to this hypothesis, is of opinion, that the sea between
this

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this long chain of islands and the southern coasts of Asia, should be divided into three great basons; the limits of which seem to have been circumscribed or drawn by the hand of nature.

THE first, which lies towards the west, between Arabia and Persia, is bounded towards the south by that chain of islands, which extends from Cape Comorin and the Maldivia Islands to Madagascar. This bason, which runs into the land, is incessantly enlarging the gulph of Persia and the red sea. The second of these basons forms the gulph of Bengal. The third includes the great Archipelago, which contains the Sunda, the Moluccas, and the Philippine Islands. This joins Asia to the southern continent, and serves as a boundary to the pacific ocean. Between this sea and the great Archipelago, a kind of new bason is formed by a chain of mountains under the water towards the east, which extends from the Ladrone to the Japan Islands. When we have passed these celebrated islands, we come to a chain of islands called Kuriles, which touch the southern point of the Peninsula of Kamtschatka; and form a fifth bason into which the river Amur empties itself; but as its entrance is obstructed by the Bamboos, which grow there in great abundance, it is imagined that this sea has very little depth.

THESE geographical details, far from being foreign to our purpose, are in a manner necessary to direct and engage our attention to the richest and finest continent upon the globe. We will begin with Indostan.

Natural
history of
Indostan.

THOUGH by the general name of the East Indies is commonly understood that immense tract of land which lies beyond the Arabian sea, and the Persian empire; yet by Indostan is properly meant a country lying between two celebrated rivers, the Indus and the Ganges, which fall into the Indian ocean, at the distance of four hundred leagues from each other. A
ridge

ridge of high mountains runs across this long tract from north to south, and dividing it into two equal parts, extends as far as Cape Comorin, where it forms the boundary between the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel.

IT is a remarkable circumstance, and perhaps the only one of the kind, that this ridge seems to be a barrier erected by nature, to separate one season from another. The mere breadth of these mountains divides summer from winter, that is to say, the season of fine weather from the rainy; for it is well known there is no winter between the tropics: all that is meant by winter in India is that time of the year when the clouds, which the sun attracts from the sea, are driven violently by the winds against the mountains, where they break and dissolve in rain, accompanied with frequent storms. From hence torrents are formed, which rush from the hills, swell the rivers, and overflow the vallies; dark vapours, that obscure the day, and spread a thick and impenetrable gloom over the deluged country: but as the chaos which brooded over the principles of things before the creation, this cloudy season promotes fertility; for at this time the plants and flowers appear in full strength and beauty, and the fruits in general come to maturity.

THE summer may naturally be expected to preserve its usual temperature better than the winter, in a climate so immediately under the influence of the sun: the sky, without a cloud to intercept its rays seems to be all on fire; but the sea-breezes which spring up in the day-time, and the land breezes that blow during the night, alternately alleviate the heat of the atmosphere; yet the calms, that now and then intervene, stifle these refreshing gales, and the inhabitants are reduced to suffer the inconveniencies of excessive drought.

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THE effect of the two different seasons is still more remarkably felt in the two Indian oceans, where they are distinguished by the name of the dry and rainy monsoons. While the sea that washes the coasts of Malabar is agitated by storms, which the returning sun introduces with the spring, the slightest vessels sail securely along the coast of Coromandel upon a smooth surface, and require neither skill nor precaution in their pilots; but in the autumn, which, in its turn, changes the face of the elements, the western coast enjoys a perfect calm, while the eastern Indian ocean is tossed by tempests; each experiencing, as it were, the alternatives of peace and war. An inhabitant of the island of Ceylon, who contemplates the equatorial region at the two equinoxes, beholds the seas on the right hand and on the left alternately agitated with storms, or lulled into tranquillity; as if the Author of Nature, in these two instants of equilibrium, turned at once the scales of good and evil, which he holds perpetually in his hands. It is not improbable that the doctrine of the Manichees, concerning the two principles, might take its rise in India, where the two empires of good and evil are divided only by a partition of mountains; since pain and pleasure seem to be as much the origin of the different forms of worship, as they are of the ideas of mankind. There is so infinite a connection between natural and moral principles, that all systems of importance to the happiness of the human species have taken their colour from the nature of the climate: accordingly it is observable, that the Indians, whose imaginations receive the deepest impression of nature from the more forcible operation of good and evil, and the view they constantly have of the discord of the elements, are placed in a situation most fertile in revolutions, events and transactions of every kind.

HENCE

HENCE it is, that the celebrated countries of India have long engaged the attention of the philosopher and the historian, whose conjectures have assigned to their earliest inhabitants an æra of the most extraordinary antiquity. To say the truth, whether we consult historical records, or consider the position of Indostan upon the globe, taking it for granted, that the ocean has a progressive motion from east to west, we must allow that this part of the earth was the first that was inhabited. We may trace the origin of most of the sciences in the history of that country. Even before the age of Pythagoras, the Greeks travelled to India for instruction; the trade carried on by them with the oldest commercial nations, in exchange for their cloth, is a proof of their great progress in the arts of industry.

UPON the whole, it should seem reasonable to conclude, that a part of the globe, the best adapted to the human species, would be peopled the earliest: and that the first men would fix their abode in a delicious climate, pure air, and a soil too fertile to require much cultivation. If the human race could be supposed to multiply and extend themselves in those regions, where they must maintain a perpetual struggle with nature: if they could inhabit burning sands, impracticable morasses, and regions of perpetual ice; or frequent deserts and forests, where they must defend themselves against the violence of the elements, and the attacks of wild beasts: how easily might they not form themselves into societies in these delightful countries, where mankind, exempt from necessity, has nothing to pursue but pleasure; where enjoying without labour or anxiety the choicest productions, and the most glorious prospect of the great scene of nature, they might justly assume the distinguishing title of Lords of the Creation! These beautiful scenes present themselves on the banks of the Ganges,
and

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and in the plains of Indostan. The air is perfumed with the most delicious fruits, which afford a wholesome and refreshing nourishment; the trees form a shade impenetrable to the rays of the sun. While the living animals that are dispersed over the globe, cannot subsist in other parts without devouring each other, they share in India, in common with their master, the sweets of plenty and security. Even at this day, when the earth may be supposed to have been exhausted by the productions of so many ages, and their consumption in foreign countries, Indostan, if we except a few sandy and barren districts, is still the most fruitful country in the world.

Religion,
govern-
ment, and
customs of
Indostan.

THE system of morals in this country is no less extraordinary than the system of nature. When we fix our eyes on this vast region, where nature hath exerted her utmost efforts for the happiness of man, we cannot but regret that man hath done all in his power to oppose her. The rage of conquest, and what is no less destructive an evil, the greediness of traders have, in their turns, ravaged and oppressed the finest country on the face of the globe.

NOTWITHSTANDING the numbers of savage banditti, and other strangers, whom war or the desire of gain has invited to India, it is easy to distinguish the antient inhabitants. There is not, however, so much difference in the cast of complexion and outward appearance of these people, as in the particularities of their character; oppressed as they have been with the yoke of tyranny, or rather of the wildest anarchy, they have not adopted either the manners, the laws, or the religion of their masters. Their continual experience of all the horrors of war, all the excesses and vices of which human nature is capable, has not tainted their character. Nothing has ever been able to reconcile the tender, humane and timorous,

rous Indian to scenes of blood, or to animate him with the courage and spirit of rebellion. His vices arise solely from a weak mind.

THE judicious traveller, who passing over the plains of Egypt, sees trunks of columns, mutilated statues, broken entablatures, and immense pyramids that have escaped the ravages of war and time dispersed about the country, is lost in admiration at the view of the ruins of a nation which no longer exists. He cannot now find out the situation of Thebes, that city so celebrated in antiquity for its hundred gates; but the venerable remains of its temples and of its tombs, give him a higher idea of its magnificence than the descriptions of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus.

WHEN we attentively examine the accounts given by travellers of the manners of the natives of India, we seem to wander among heaps of ruins, the remains of an immense fabric. The original form is lost, but enough is preserved to convince us of the magnificence and regularity of the plans. Amidst a variety of absurd superstitions, puerile and extravagant customs, strange ceremonies and prejudices, we may discover the traces of sublime morality, deep philosophy, and refined policy; but when we attempt to trace the religious and civil institutions to their origin, we find that is lost in the maze of antiquity. By the most ancient traditions, the Indians appear to have been the first who received the rudiments of science, and the polish of civilization. But their legislative system has never been discovered; and the antients themselves seem only to have been acquainted with the remains of it.

IN India are found the traces of a multitude of superstitious observances, arts, sports, errors and truths of all kinds, which have been adopted by almost all nations.

THE Indians themselves are ignorant of the origin of their religion and policy: they have to this day preserved customs which must certainly have owed their rise to a system that no longer exists: the spirit of their political constitution is lost, and every branch of it either changed or corrupted. Their religion, which was of the allegorical and moral kind, hath degenerated into a heap of extravagant and obscene superstitions, owing to their having realized those fictions which were intended merely as so many symbols and emblems.

WERE it possible to obtain a sight of their sacred books, the only remains there are of the Indian antiquities, we might, in some measure, be enabled to remove the veil that envelops these numerous mysteries; but we have little reason to hope that we shall ever be intrusted with such a communication.

THE emperor Mahmoud Akbar had an inclination to make himself acquainted with the principles of all the religious sects throughout his extensive provinces. Having discarded the superstitious notions with which he had been prepossessed by his education in the Mohammedan faith, he resolved to judge for himself. It was easy for him to be acquainted with the nature of those systems, that are formed upon the plan of making proselytes; but he found himself disappointed in his design, when he came to treat with the Indians, who will not admit any person whatever to the participation of their mysteries.

NEITHER the authority nor promises of Akbar could prevail with the Bramins to disclose the tenets of their religion; he was therefore obliged to have recourse to artifice. The stratagem he made use of was, to cause an infant, of the name of Feizi, to be committed to the care of these priests, as a poor orphan of the sacerdotal line, who alone could be initiated into the

the sacred rites of their theology. Feizi having received the proper instructions for the part he was to act, was conveyed privately to Benares, the seat of knowledge in Indostan; he was received into the house of a learned Bramin, who educated him with the same care as if he had been his son. After the youth had spent ten years in study, Akbar was desirous of recalling him; but he was struck with the charms of the daughter of his preceptor.

THE women of the sacerdotal tribe are looked upon as the greatest beauties in Indostan. The old Bramin laid no restraint on the growing passion of the two lovers; he was fond of Feizi, who had gained his affections by his address and docility, and offered him his daughter in marriage. The young man, divided between love and gratitude, resolved to conceal the fraud no longer; and falling at the feet of the Bramin, discovered the imposture, and asked pardon for his offence.

THE priest, without reproaching him in the least, seized a poinard which hung at his girdle, and was going to plunge it in his breast, if Feizi had not prevented him by taking hold of his arm. The young man used every means to pacify him, and declared himself ready to do any thing to expiate his treachery. The Bramin bursting into tears, promised to pardon him on condition that he should swear never to translate the *Bedas*, or sacred volumes, or disclose to any person whatever the symbol of the Bramin creed. Feizi readily promised all that the Bramin required: how far he kept his word is not known; but the sacred books of the Indians have never been translated by him, or any one else, to this day.

As the Bramins are the only persons who understand the language of the sacred book, their comments on the text are the same as those which have ever been

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made on religious books; all the maxims which fancy, interest, passion or false zeal can suggest, are to be found in these volumes. These exclusive pretensions of the interpreters of religion have given them that unbounded influence over the people, which impostors and fanatics will not fail to exert over men who have not the courage to consult their own reason, or their own feelings.

FROM the Indus to the Ganges, the *Vedam* is universally received as the book that contains the principles of religion; but the generality differ on several points relative to faith and practice. That spirit of debate and refinement, which for so many ages has infected the philosophy of our schools, has made still further progress among the Bramins, and caused more absurdities in their doctrines than it has introduced into ours, by a mixture of Platonism which is perhaps itself derived from the doctrines of the Bramins.

THROUGHOUT all Indostan, the laws of government, customs and manners make a part of religion; being all derived from Brama, a being far superior in dignity to the human race, the interpreter of the divinity, the author of the sacred books, and the great law-giver of India.

THERE is some reason to believe that Brama was possessed of the sovereign authority; as his religious institutions were evidently designed to inspire the people with a profound reverence and great love for their country, and are particularly levelled against the vices incident to the climate. Few religions seem to have been so well adapted to the countries for which they were calculated.

IT is from Brama that the Indians derive their religious veneration for the three capital rivers of Indostan, the Indus, the Christina, and the Ganges. It was he who consecrated the animal that is most serviceable

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in the cultivation of land, as well as the cow, whose milk is so wholesome a nourishment in hot countries.

To him they ascribe the division of the people into tribes or *castes*, distinguished from each other by their political and religious principles. This institution is antecedent to all traditions and known records, and may be considered as the most striking proof of the great antiquity of the Indians. Nothing appears more contrary to the natural progress of social connections, than this distribution of the members of the same community into distinct classes. Such an idea could only be the result of a studied plan of legislation, which pre-supposes a great proficiency in civilization and knowledge. Another circumstance still more extraordinary is, that this distinction should continue so many ages, after the leading idea and connecting tie was forgotten; and affords us a remarkable example of the strength of national prejudices, when sanctified by religious ideas.

THE nation is divided into four classes, the Bramins, the soldiery, husbandmen and mechanics: these classes have their subdivisions. There are several orders of Bramins: those who mix in society are, for the most part, very corrupt in their morals; they believe that the water of the Ganges will wash away all their crimes; and as they are not subject to any civil jurisdiction, live without either restraint or virtue, excepting that character of compassion and charity which is so commonly found in the mild climate of India.

THE others who live abstracted from the world, are either weak-minded men or enthusiasts, and abandon themselves to laziness, superstition, and the dreams of metaphysics. We find in their disputes the very same ideas that occur in the writings of our most celebrated metaphysicians; such as, substance, accident, priority, posteriority, immutability, indivisibility, the
vital

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vital and sensitive soul ; but with this difference, that in India these fine discoveries are very antient, though it is but a very short time since father Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, Leibnitz, and Mallebranche astonished all Europe with their dexterity in raising these visionary systems. As this abstracted manner of reasoning was derived to us from the Greek philosophers, whose refinements we have far exceeded, it is not improbable that the Greeks themselves might have borrowed this ridiculous knowledge from the Indians ; unless we rather chuse to suppose, that as the principles of metaphysics lie open to the capacities of all nations, the indolence of the Bramins may have produced the same effect in India, as that of our monks has done in Europe : notwithstanding the inhabitants of one country had never communicated their doctrines to those of the other,

SUCH are the descendants of the ancient Brachmans, whom antiquity never speaks of but with admiration ; because the affectation of austerity and mystery, and the privilege of declaring the will of heaven have imposed upon the vulgar in all ages. The Greeks ascribe to them the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and certain notions concerning the nature of the Supreme Being, and future rewards and punishments.

To this species of knowledge, which is the more flattering to the curiosity of man in proportion as it transcends his weak capacity, the Brachmans added an infinite number of religious observances, which were adopted by Pythagoras in his school ; such as fasting, prayer, silence, and contemplation ; virtues of the imagination, which have a more powerful effect upon the vulgar than those of a useful and beneyolent tendency. The Brachmans were looked upon as the friends of the gods, because they affected to pay them

so much regard ; and as the protectors of mankind, because they paid them no regard at all. No bounds were therefore set to the respect and gratitude that were shewn them ; princes themselves did not scruple to consult these recluses upon any critical conjuncture, from a supposition, no doubt, that they were inspired ; since it was impossible to imagine that they had the advantages of experience. We can scarcely, however, deny that there might be among them some men of real virtue, whose minds relished the pure and ingenuous delights of study and science ; and who, by nobly raising their thoughts to the contemplation of the first Being, must have had more powerful incitements to render themselves worthy of his care, and none to justify them in deceiving, and tyrannizing over their fellow-creatures.

THE military class consists of the Rajas on the coast of Coromandel, and the Nairs on the coast of Malabar. There are likewise whole nations, the Canarins and the Marattas for instance, who assume the profession, either because they are descendants of some tribes originally devoted to arms, or because times and circumstances have introduced a change in their primitive institutions.

THE third class consists entirely of husbandmen, and there are few countries where this set of men have a better title to the gratitude of their fellow-subjects ; they are laborious and industrious, perfectly acquainted with the art of distributing their rivulets, and of making the burning soil they inhabit as fertile as possible. They are in India what they would be every where else, if not corrupted or oppressed by government, the most honest and virtuous of men. This class, which was formerly much respected, was free from tyranny, and the ravages of war ; never were the husbandmen obliged to bear arms ; their lands and their labours

labours were held equally sacred; they ploughed their fields within view of contending armies, who suffered them to pursue their peaceful toil without molestation; their corn was never set on fire, nor their trees cut down; religion too, that all-powerful principle, lent her assistance to reason, which, though it inculcates indeed the propriety of protecting useful occupations, has not of itself sufficient influence to enforce the execution of its own laws.

THE tribe of mechanics was branched out into as many subdivisions as there are trades; no one was allowed to relinquish the profession of his parents; for which reason industry and vassalage have ever gone hand in hand, and carried the arts to as high perfection as they can possibly attain without the assistance of taste and imagination, which seldom unfold themselves but under the kind influences of emulation and liberty.

BESIDES these tribes, there is a fifth, which is the outcast of all the rest; the members of it are employed in the meanest offices of society; they bury the dead, carry away dirt, and live upon the flesh of animals that die natural deaths; they are held in such abhorrence, that if any of their society dares to touch any person belonging to the other classes, he has a right to kill him on the spot; they are called Parias.

IN Malabar there is another race of men, called Poulichees, who suffer still greater injuries and hardships; they inhabit the forests, where they are not permitted to build huts, but are obliged to make a kind of nest upon the trees: when they are pressed with hunger, they howl like wild beasts to excite the compassion of the passengers. The most charitable among the Indians deposit some rice or other food at the foot of a tree, and retire with all possible haste, to give the famished wretch an opportunity of taking it without meeting with his benefactor,

benefactor, who would think himself polluted by coming near him.

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THE Europeans, by living with these unhappy people upon terms of common humanity, at length made themselves almost equally the objects of detestation among the Indians. This detestation prevails even to this day in the inland parts of the country, where the want of intercourse keeps alive those rooted prejudices, which wear off gradually near the sea-coasts, where the interests and mutual wants of commerce unite men with each other, and consequently introduce juster notions of human nature.

ALL these classes are for ever separated from each other by unsurmountable barriers; they are not allowed to intermarry, live, or eat together. Whoever transgresses this rule, is banished as a disgrace to his tribe.

BUT it is quite otherwise when they go in pilgrimage to the temple of Jagrenat, or the Supreme Being. At these seasons the Bramins, the Raja or Nair, the husbandman and mechanic carry their offerings, and eat and drink promiscuously; they are there admonished that the distinctions of birth are of human institution, and that all men are brethren and children of the same God.

THE religious system which has given a sanction to the subordination of rank among the Indians, has not had sufficient influence to prevent them entirely from aspiring to those marks of distinction which are appropriated to the superior classes. Ambition, so natural to mankind, has sometimes exerted itself, and singular expedients have been tried by men jealous of superiority to share with the Bramins the veneration of the multitude; this has given rise to a race of monks known in India by the name of Fakirs.

MEN of all the tribes or castes are permitted to follow this class of life; nothing more is required than to emulate the Bramins in abstracted contemplation and indolence; but at the same time they are obliged to surpass them in excessive austerities, which strike the mildest people in the world with religious horror. The appearance of these fanatics exceeds imagination; some of them wallow in the dirt, others accustom themselves to painful postures, extending their arms over their head till they are unable to recover their natural position; and a third sort continue standing seven or eight days together, which occasions prodigious swellings in their legs; they all of them enter into an engagement never to wash their bodies, or comb their hair; and to oppose and disgrace nature with a view of recommending themselves to its author. The respect paid them by the people is their only recompense for these sacrifices, which infinitely exceed all the mortifications practised by the European monks; if those may be called mortifications, which are nothing more than singular ceremonies practised at an early age, when to get rid of scruples concerning the gratification of natural and forbidden passions, the youthful imagination ardently embraces any system of life, however extravagant, provided it has received the public sanction, and is calculated to administer to their pleasures.

THOUGH in the sacred books of the Indians we do not meet with those instances of the marvellous, which sometimes strike so forcibly in the Greek theology, their mythology is as irregular as that of almost any other people. We do not find, in particular, any connection between their religious principles and the several classes that form the basis of their government. The shaftah is looked upon by some as a commentary on the vedam, and by others as an original work, an extract of which

which has been lately published in England, and has thrown some light upon this subject. This book teaches, that the Eternal Being absorbed in the contemplation of his own essence, formed the resolution of creating beings, who might partake of his glory. He spoke, and angels rose into existence; they sang in concert the praises of their Creator, and harmony reigned in the celestial regions, when two of these spirits having revolted, drew a legion after them. The Supreme Being drove them into a place of torment, from whence they were released at the intercession of the faithful angels, upon conditions, which at once inspired them with joy and terror. The rebels were sentenced, under different forms, to undergo punishments in the lowest of the fifteen planets, in proportion to the enormity of their first offence; accordingly each angel underwent eighty-seven transmigrations upon earth, before he animated the body of a cow, which holds the highest rank among the animal tribes. These different transmigrations are considered as so many stages of expiation, preparatory to a state of probation, which commences as soon as the angel transmigrates from the body of the cow into a human body: in this situation the Creator enlarges his intellectual faculties, and constitutes him a free agent; and his good or bad conduct hastens or retards the time of his pardon. The good are at their death, re-united to the Supreme Being, and the wicked begin anew the æra of their expiation.

HENCE it appears, from this tradition of the shastah, that the metempsychosis is an actual punishment, and that the souls which animate the generality of the brute creation, are nothing more than wicked spirits. This explanation is certainly not universally adopted in India. It was probably invented by some devotee of a melancholy and rigid cast, as the doctrine of the transmi-

transmigration of souls seems originally to have been founded rather on hope than fear.

IN fact, it is natural to suppose that it was only adopted at first as an idea that flattered and soothed mankind, and would easily be embraced in a country where men, living under the influence of a delicious climate and a mild government, began to be sensible of the shortness of life. A system, therefore, which extended it beyond its natural limits could not fail to be well received. It is a consolation to an old man, who sees himself deserted by all that is dear to him, to imagine that his enjoyments will still remain, and that his dissolution only opens a passage to another scene of existence. At the same time, it is equally a matter of consolation to the friends who attend him in his last moments, to think, that in leaving the world he does not relinquish the hopes of rising once more into life. Hence was the rise and progress of the doctrine of transmigration. Reason, dissatisfied with this illusion, may urge in vain, that without recollection there can be no continuance or identity of being; and that if a man does not remember that he has existed, he is in the same situation as if he had never existed before:—Sentiment adopted what reason disallowed.

THE shaftah, no doubt, has given a greater air of severity to the doctrine of the metempsychosis, with a view of making it more instrumental in supporting the system of morality necessary to be established. In fact, upon this idea of transmigration considered in the light of a punishment, the shaftah explains the duties which the angels were required to perform. The principal ones were charity, abstinence from animal food, and a scrupulous adherence to the profession of their ancestors. This last-mentioned prejudice, in which all these people agree, notwithstanding they differ in their opinions concerning its origin, is without example,

ample, unless it be among the ancient Egyptians, whose institutions and those of the Indians have certainly some historical relation to each other, which is now unknown to us. But though the Egyptian laws established a distinction of ranks, none were held in contempt; while on the contrary, the laws of Brama, by the introduction, perhaps, of some abuses, seem to have condemned one part of the nation to pain and infamy.

THERE is reason to believe that the Indians were almost as civilized when Brama instituted his laws, as they are at present. Whenever a community begins to assume a certain form, it naturally divides into several classes, according to the variety and extent of those arts that are necessary to supply its demands.

It was doubtless the intention of Brama, by confirming these different professions by sanctions of religion, and confining the exercise of them perpetually to the same families, to give them a lasting establishment on political principles; but he did not foresee that by these means he should obstruct the progress of discoveries, which, in the end, might give rise to new occupations. Accordingly, if we may judge by the scrupulous attention paid by the Indians at this day to the laws of Brama, we may affirm that industry has made no advances among this people, since the time of this legislator; and that they were almost as civilized as they are at present, when they first received his laws. This remark is sufficient to give us an idea of the antiquity of these people, who have made no improvements in knowledge since an æra which seems to be the most ancient in history.

BRAMA prescribed different kinds of food for these respective tribes. The military, and some other ranks, were permitted to eat venison and mutton. Fish was allowed to some husbandmen and mechanics. Others lived upon milk and vegetables. None of the Bra-
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mins ate any thing that had life. Upon the whole, these people are extremely sober; but their abstinence varies in proportion to the greater or less labour required in their professions.

THEY marry in their infancy, and their wives maintain a character of fidelity unknown in other countries. Some of the superior ranks are allowed the privilege of having several wives. It is well known that the wives of the Bramins burn themselves on the death of their husbands, and they seem to be the only persons who are obliged to it by the laws. Others, however, have been disposed to follow their example, led by that point of honour to which so many victims are sacrificed in all countries. This cruel injunction is confined to widows who have no issue. Those who have children are expected to take care of their education and settlement in the world. Were it not for this precaution, the state, which ought to be the guardian of these orphans, would be laden with a very oppressive burthen.

SINCE the Moguls became masters of Indostan, these horrible spectacles have been much less frequent, as it costs a sum too considerable for any but the rich to obtain a licence for that purpose. But this obstacle has sometimes made their inclinations the stronger. Some women have been known to devote themselves for several years to the lowest and most laborious employments, in order to raise money to defray the expences of this extravagant suicide. Others have been more eagerly ambitious of sacrificing themselves, in proportion as scenes of this kind became less common.

A FEW years ago a young, beautiful, and rich widow of Surat aspired to this high honour. The governor refused to grant her permission to consign herself, with all her valuable accomplishments, to the flames. The lady, full of indignation, took a handful of burning coals, and seemingly regardless of the pain, said

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in a firm tone to the governor: *Consider not alone the tenderness of my age; see with what insensibility I hold this fire in my hands; and know that with equal constancy I shall throw myself into the flames.*

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ALL the women, however, are not animated with this enthusiastic intrepidity. Many of them, who were ambitious of devoting themselves to the manes of their husbands, have been seized with an involuntary tremor when their approaching fate appeared in all its horrors. To encourage them to this great action, so contrary to reason and nature, a mixture is given them, which, by stupifying the senses, removes the apprehensions which the preparation for death must unavoidably occasion. The moment the intoxication takes place, these unfortunate widows are directly thrown upon the fatal pile; and to this stratagem, invented by the advocates for fanaticism, are to be attributed those seeming signs of joy and satisfaction, which appear in their countenances at the sight of those devouring flames that are ready to reduce them to ashes.

THIS institution is not attributed to Brama, but rather seems to be the invention of some Bramin, who carried his jealousy beyond the grave. It is a piece of refinement, dictated by a barbarous and over-strained affection, and suitable to the character of those superstitious mortals, who think there is an essential merit in rigid morality, and what they call a superior purity.

THESE people are of a mild, humane disposition, and are almost strangers to the passions that prevail among us. What motive of ambition can there be among men who are destined to continue always in the same state? They love peaceable labour and an indolent life, and often quote this passage of one of their favourite authors: *'Tis better to sit still than to walk; better to sleep than to awake; But death is best of all.*

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THEIR temperance, and the excessive heats of the climate, restrain the violence of their passions, and weaken their propensity to amorous pleasures. Avarice, which reigns chiefly in people of weak bodies, and little minds, is almost their only passion.

WE may judge of their ingenuity in arts by the specimens that are brought from India. They are not to be made without much difficulty, but they are destitute of taste and elegance. The sciences are still more neglected, nor have they the least notion of mechanics; before they were acquainted with the Mohammedans, no bridges had ever been erected. The Pagodas are in general nothing more than miserable structures of a square form, admitting no light but at the entrance, which always fronts the east; this defect is supplied by tapers, which are kept burning by the pious and devout. It is asserted, however, that their great Pagodas are regularly built, and that the ornaments both within and without are of considerable value. The idol is placed in the centre of the building, so that the Parias who are not admitted into the temple, may have a sight of it through the gates. In these Pagodas there are cisterns of water for the purification of the Indians. These superstitious ceremonies are chiefly observed by the people. It is said that there still some of the Bramins who know how to calculate eclipses; but it is not very easy to discover whether this is done by means of some of their tables derived from their ancestors, or whether they are really acquainted with the theory previously necessary towards the solution of such problems.

THE military class have chosen to fix their residence in the northern provinces, and the peninsula is chiefly inhabited by the inferior tribes. Hence it has happened, that all the powers who have attacked India by sea, have met with so little resistance. It may not be
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amiss to remind those philosophers who maintain that man is an animal destined to subsist upon the fruits of the earth, that the military people who indulge in animal food, are more robust, courageous and sprightly, and live longer than those of the other classes who feed upon vegetables; at the same time it must be owned, that the difference between the inhabitants of the north and south, is of too uniform a cast to be attributed entirely to the particular kind of nourishment; the cold of the north, the elasticity of the air, less fertility and more labour and exercise, with a more varied kind of life; all these circumstances whet the appetite, brace the nerves, raise a spirit of resolution and activity, and give a firmer tone to the organs: on the other hand, the heats of the south, together with great quantities of fruit, an active life, a constant perspiration, a more free and more lavish use of the means conducive to population, more indulgence in effeminate pleasures, and a sedantry and uniform course of life, while they increase the number of births, occasion a speedier dissolution. Upon the whole it should seem, that though man was not by nature designed to consume the flesh of animals, he is endued with a power of accommodating himself to the various modes of life that prevail in every different climate, and either hunts and lives upon flesh or vegetables; or turns shepherd or husbandman according to the fertility or barrenness of the soil.

THE religion of Brama was anciently, and still continues to be divided into eighty-three sects, which agree in some fundamental points, and have no disputes about the rest; they live in amity with men of all persuasions, as their own does not oblige them to make proselytes. The Indians seldom admit strangers to their worship, and always with the greatest reluctance. This was in some measure the spirit of the

ancient superstition, as it appears among the Egyptians, the Jews, the Greeks, and the Romans: and though it has occasioned fewer ravages than the zeal of making converts, it prevents the intercourses of society, and raises an additional barrier between one people and another.

WHEN we consider how bounteously nature has provided for the happiness of these fertile countries, where every want is easily supplied; and that the compassionate temper and morals of the Indians render them equally averse from persecution and the spirit of conquest, we cannot help lamenting that a barbarous inequality should have distinguished one part of the nation by power and privileges, while the rest of the inhabitants are loaded with misery and contempt. What can be the cause of this strange illusion? It must doubtless be traced to that principle which has been the constant source of all the calamities that have befallen the inhabitants of this globe.

WE need only suppose that a powerful people, with few lights to direct them, adopt an original error, which ignorance brings into fashion: as soon as this error becomes general, it is made the basis of an entire system of politics and morality; and men begin to find that their innocent propensities run counter to their duty. In order to conform to this new plan of morality, they must perpetually be offering violence to the order of nature. This continual struggle will introduce a most amazing contrariety into their manners; and the nation will be composed of a set of wretches, who will pass their lives in mutually tormenting each other, and accusing nature. Such is the picture of all the people upon earth, excepting perhaps, a few societies of savages. Absurd prejudices have perverted human reason, and even stifled that instinct which teaches animals to resist oppression and tyranny.

ny. Multitudes of the human race implicitly submit to be a sort of vassals to a small number of men who oppress them.

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SUCH is the fatal progress of that original error, which imposture has either produced or kept up in the mind of man. May true knowledge revive those rights of reasonable beings, which to be recovered, want only to be known! Ye sages of the earth, philosophers of every nation, it is yours alone to make laws by pointing them out to your countrymen. Take the glorious resolution to instruct your fellow creatures, and be assured that it is much easier to propagate truth than error. Mankind, animated by the desire of happiness, to which you will point the way, will listen to you with attention. Make those millions of hireling slaves blush, who are always ready, at the command of their masters, to destroy their fellow-citizens. Rouse all the powers of human nature to oppose this subversion of social laws. Teach mankind that liberty is the institution of God; authority that of man. Expose those mysterious arts which hold the world in chains and darkness: let the people be sensible how far their credulity has been imposed upon; let them re-assume with one accord the use of their faculties, and vindicate the honour of the human race.

BESIDES the natives, the Portuguese found Mohammedans in India, some of whom came from the borders of Africa. The greatest part of them were descendants of the Arabs, who either settled here or made incursions. They had possessed themselves of all the countries as far as the Indus, by the force of arms. The most enterprising among them passed this river, and successively penetrated into the extremities of the east. On this immense continent they became the factors of Arabia and Egypt, and were treated with distinguished respect by all the sovereigns who wished

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to keep up an intercourse with these countries. Here they multiplied to a great degree; for as their religion allowed polygamy, they married in every place where they made any stay.

THEIR success was still more rapid and lasting in the islands that lie scattered in this ocean. The want of commerce procured them the best reception both from princes and their subjects. They soon rose to the highest dignities in these petty states, and became the arbiters of government. They took advantage of the superiority of their knowledge, and the support they received from their country, to establish an universal dominion. The despots and their vassals, in order to ingratiate themselves with them, abandoned a religion to which they had no great attachment, for new opinions which might procure them some advantages. This sacrifice cost them the less, as the preachers of the Koran made no scruple of mixing ancient superstitions among those they wished to establish.

THESE Mohammedan Arabs, who were apostles and merchants at the same time, had already propagated their religion by purchasing a great number of slaves, to whom, after they had been circumcised and instructed in their doctrine, they gave their freedom; but as a certain pride prevented them from mixing their blood with that of these freedmen, the latter have in time become a distinct people, inhabiting the coast of the Indian peninsula from Goa to Madras; they are at present known in Malabar by the name of Pooliahs, and by that of Coolies in Coromandel; they understand neither the Persian, the Arabian, nor the Moorish language, and confine themselves to that of the countries in which they live; the generality are addicted to commerce, and profess a species of Mohammedism extremely corrupted by the Indian superstitions.

INDOSTAN,

INDOSTAN, which has since been almost entirely reduced by war under a foreign yoke, was, at the time of the arrival of the Portuguese, divided between the kings of Cambaya, Delhi, Bisnagar, Narzingua and Calicut, each of which reckoned several sovereigns, more or less powerful, among their tributaries. The last of these monarchs who is better known by the name of Zamorin, which answers to that of emperor, than by the name of his capital city, possessed the most maritime states, and his empire extended over all Malabar.

THERE is an ancient tradition, that when the Arabs began to establish themselves in India in the eighth century, the king of Malabar took so great a fancy to their religion, that he not only embraced it, but determined to end his days at Mecca. Calicut, where he embarked, became a place so dear and respectable to the Moors, that they were insensibly led to make it the constant rendezvous of their ships. Thus by the sole effect of this superstition, this harbour, incommodious and dangerous as it was, became the richest staple of these countries. Precious stones, pearls, amber, ivory, china-ware, gold and silver, silks and cottons, indigo, sugar, all kinds of spices, valuable woods, perfumes, beautiful varnish, and whatever conduces to the elegance of life, were carried thither from all parts of the east. Some of these rich commodities came by sea; but as navigation was neither so safe nor pursued with so much spirit as it is now, a great deal was brought by land by buffaloes and elephants.

GAMA, having informed himself of these particulars, when he touched at Melinda, hired an able pilot to conduct him to that port in which trade was the most flourishing. Here he fortunately met with a Moor of Tunis, who understood the Portuguese language, and having seen with admiration the great achievements

The Portuguese establish a settlement on the coast of Malabar,

ments of this nation on the coasts of Barbary, conceived a fondness for it which overcame his prejudices. This predilection engaged the Moor to use all his interest in favour of these strangers, who put themselves entirely under his direction. He procured Gama an audience of the Zamorin, who proposed an alliance, and a treaty of commerce with the king his master. This was upon the point of being concluded, when the Mussulmen found means to throw a suspicion upon a rival power, whose courage, activity and knowledge they dreaded. The reports they made to him of its ambition and restlessness, made such an impression on the mind of the prince, that he resolved to destroy those adventurers to whom he had just before given so favourable a reception.

GAMA being informed of this change by his faithful guide, sent his brother on board the fleet, telling him, *If you should hear that I am thrown into prison, or put to death, I forbid you, as your commander, either to come to my assistance, or revenge my death; set sail immediately, and inform the king of the particulars of our voyage.*

THEY were happily not reduced to these extremities. The Zamorin, who wanted neither power nor inclination, wanted courage to put his design in execution; and the admiral had leave to return to his fleet. After making some well timed reprisals, which procured a restitution of the merchandise he had left as a pledge in Calicut, he sailed for Europe.

IT is impossible to describe the joy that prevailed at Lisbon on his return. The inhabitants beheld themselves on the point of establishing the richest commerce in the world, and being not only avaricious, but superstitious at the same time, flattered themselves with the hopes of propagating their religion either by persuasion, or by the force of arms. The popes, who omitted

omitted no opportunity of confirming the opinion of their supreme authority upon earth, gave the Portuguese all the coasts they should discover in the east, and inspired this little state with all the folly of conquest.

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NUMBERS were eager to embark on board the new fleet that was fitted out for an expedition to India. Thirteen vessels that sailed from the Tagus, under the command of Alvares Cabral, arrived at Calicut, and restored some of the Zamorin's subjects whom Gama had carried away with him. These Indians spoke highly of the treatment they had received; but it was a long time before the Zamorin was reconciled to the Portuguese; the Moorish party prevailed, and the people of Calicut, seduced by their intrigues, massacred fifty of the adventurers. Cabral, in revenge, burnt all the Arabian vessels in the harbour, cannonaded the town, and then sailed first to Cochin and afterwards to Cananor.

THE kings of both these towns gave him spices, offered him gold and silver, and proposed an alliance with him against the Zamorin, to whom they were tributaries. The kings of Onor, Culan, and several other princes, made the same overtures; flattering themselves that they should all be relieved from the tribute they paid to the Zamorin, extend the frontiers of their states, and see their harbours crouded with the spoils of Asia. This general infatuation procured to the Portuguese so great an ascendant over the whole country of Malabar, that wherever they appeared they gave the law. No sovereign was suffered to enter into an alliance with them, unless he would acknowledge himself dependent on the court of Lisbon, give leave that a citadel should be built in his capital, and sell his merchandise at the price fixed by the buyer. The foreign merchant was obliged to wait till the Portuguese had completed their lading; and no person was suffered to navigate these seas without producing passports

ports from them. The wars in which they were unavoidably engaged, gave little interruption to their trade; with a small number of men they defeated numerous armies; their enemies met with them every where, and always fled before them; and, in a short time, the ships of the Moors, of the Zamorin and his dependents, no longer dared to make their appearance.

THE Portuguese, thus become the conquerors of the east, were perpetually sending rich cargoes to their own country, which resounded with the fame of their exploits. The port of Lisbon gradually became the resort of all the traders in Europe, and the grand mart of Indian commodities; for the Portuguese, who brought them immediately from India, sold them at a lower rate than the merchants of other nations.

To secure and extend these advantages, it became necessary to call in the aid of reflection to correct and strengthen what had hitherto been the offspring of chance, a singular intrepidity, and a happy concurrence of circumstances. It was necessary to establish a system of power and commerce, which, at the same time, that it was extensive enough to take in all objects, should be so well connected, that all the parts of the grand structure they meant to raise, should mutually strengthen each other. Notwithstanding the information the court of Lisbon had received from the accounts transmitted from India, and the testimony of those who had hitherto been intrusted with the management of her interests in that quarter; it wisely reposed all its confidence in Alphonso Albuquerque, the most discerning of all the Portuguese who had been in Asia,

THE new viceroy acquitted himself beyond expectation: he found it necessary that Portugal should have an establishment which might easily be defended, where there was a good harbour and a wholesome air, and where the Portuguese might refresh themselves after the fatigues of their passage from Europe. With this
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view he cast his eyes upon Goa, which he foresaw would be an important acquisition to Lisbon.

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GOA, which rises in the form of an amphitheatre, is situated near the middle of the coast of Malabar, upon an island separated from the continent by the two branches of a river which falls into the sea at some distance from the city, forming under its walls one of the finest harbours in the world. This island is reckoned to be ten leagues in circumference. Within this little spot are to be seen hills, vallies, woods, canals, springs of excellent water, a city magnificently built, market-towns and large villages. Before the entrance into the port, we observe the two peninsulas Salfet and Barda, which equally serve the purposes of defence and shelter. They are guarded by forts lined with artillery, where all ships are obliged to stop before they come to an anchor in the harbour.

GOA, though not so considerable at that time as it has been since, was looked upon as the most advantageous post in India. It belonged to the king of the Decan; but Idalcan, who was intrusted with the government of it, had assumed an independency, and endeavoured to extend his power in Malabar. While this usurper was pursuing his schemes on the continent, Albuquerque appeared before the gates of Goa, took the city by storm, and acquired this valuable advantage with very little loss.

IDALCAN, apprized of the loss the king had sustained, did not hesitate a moment what measures he should take. In conjunction even with the Indians his enemies, who were almost as much interested in this matter as himself, he marched towards the capital, with a degree of expedition never known before in that country. The Portuguese having no firm footing, and finding themselves unable to preserve their conquest, retreated to their ships which kept their

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their station in the harbour, and sent to Cochin for a reinforcement. While they were waiting for it, their provisions failed. Idalcan offered them a supply, giving them to understand, *That he chose to conquer by arms, and not by famine.* It was customary at that time, in the Indian wars, for the armies to suffer provisions to be carried to their enemies. Albuquerque rejected the offer made him, with this reply, *That he would receive no presents from Idalcan till they were friends.* The succour he hourly expected never arrived.

THIS disappointment determined him to retreat, and to postpone the execution of his darling project to a more favourable opportunity, which presented itself a few months after. Idalcan being obliged to take the field again to preserve his dominions from absolute destruction, Albuquerque made a sudden attack upon Goa, which he carried by storm, and fortified himself in the place. As the harbour of Calicut was good for nothing, and ceased to be frequented by the Arabian vessels, all its trade and riches were transferred to this city, which became the metropolis of all the Portuguese settlements in India.

THE natives of the country were too weak, too dispirited, and too much at variance, to put a stop to the success of this enterprising nation. Nothing remained to be done but to guard against the Egyptians, nor was the least precaution either omitted or neglected.

The manner of carrying on trade in India before the conquests of the Portuguese.

EGYPT, which is considered as the parent of all historical antiquities, the source of policy, and the nursery of arts and sciences, after having remained for ages in a state of separation from the rest of the world, who were held in contempt by this wise country, understood and practised navigation. The inhabitants had long neglected the Mediterranean, where they did not certainly expect any great advantages,

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tages, and directed their course towards the Indian ocean, which was the true channel of wealth. BOOK
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STRUCK with the situation of this country between two seas, one of which opens the road to the east, and the other to the west, Alexander formed the design of fixing the seat of his empire in Egypt, and of making it the centre of trade to the whole world. This prince, who had more discernment than any other conqueror, saw that if it were possible to form an union between his present and future acquisitions, he must make choice of a country which nature seems to have placed, as it were, in contact with Africa and Asia to connect them with Europe. The premature death of the greatest commander that history and fable have held forth to the admiration of mankind, would for ever have annihilated these vast projects, had they not been in part pursued by Ptolemy, one of his lieutenants; who, upon the division of the most magnificent spoil ever known, claimed Egypt for his share.

IN the reign of this new sovereign and his immediate successors, commerce made prodigious improvements. Alexandria was the mart of the merchandize that came from India, by the red sea, to the port of Berenice.

A WRITER, who has entered deeply into this subject, and whose accounts we follow, tells us, that some of the numerous vessels that were built in consequence of these connections, traded only in the gulph with the Arabians and Abyssinians. Among those which ventured out into the main ocean, some of them sailed southward to the right along the eastern coasts of Africa, as far as the island of Madagascar; and others steering to the left towards the Persian gulph, went even as far as the Euphrates, to trade with the people on its banks, particularly with
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the Greeks, whom Alexander had brought there with him in his expeditions. Others, grown still more enterprising from the hopes of gain, penetrated as far as the mouths of the Indus, traversed the coast of Malabar, and touched at the island of Ceylon, known by the ancients under the name of Taprobane. A very small number passed through the Coromandel to go up the river Ganges, as far as Palybotra, a town the most celebrated in India on account of its riches. Thus, industry proceeded by gradual advances, from one river or coast to another, to appropriate the productions of those countries that abound most in fruits, flowers, perfumes, precious stones, and all the delicacies of voluptuous luxury.

THE boats made use of in these expeditions were long and flat, not unlike those that are seen upon the Nile. Before the invention of the compass, in consequence of which, larger vessels carrying more sail were fitted out for the main ocean; it was necessary to row close to the shore, and to follow the windings of the coast from one point of land to another. The sides of the ships were also made less, in order to weaken the power of the wind over them; and the ships less deep, for fear of striking against rocks, sands, or shallows. Thus a voyage not so long by one-third as those which are now performed in less than six months, sometimes lasted five years or more. What their vessels wanted in size, was supplied by their numbers; and the disadvantages of their slow sailing were compensated by the frequent squadrons that were fitted out.

THE Egyptians exported to India, as has been done ever since, woollen manufactures, iron, lead, copper, some small pieces of workmanship in glass and silver, in exchange for ivory, ebony, tortoise-shell, white and printed linens, silks, pearls, precious

cious stones, cinnamon, spices, and particularly frankincense; which was a perfume the most in esteem, on account of its being used in divine worship, and contributing to the gratification of princes. It sold at so high a price, that the merchants adulterated under pretence of improving it. So apprehensive is avarice of being defrauded by poverty, that the workmen who were employed in making it were naked; having only a girdle about their loins, the ends of which were sealed by the superintendant of the manufacture.

ALL the sea-faring and trading nations in the Mediterranean resorted to the ports of Egypt to purchase the produce of India. When Carthage and Corinth became the victims of the vices introduced by their opulence, the Egyptians were themselves obliged to export the riches with which these cities formerly loaded their own vessels. As their maritime power increased, they extended their navigation as far as Cadiz. They could scarcely supply the demands of Rome, whose luxury kept pace with its conquest; at the same time that they were arrived at such a pitch of extravagance themselves, that the accounts given of it have the air of romance. Cleopatra, with whom their empire and history expired, was as profuse as she was voluptuous. But notwithstanding these incredible expences, the advantages they derived from the Indian trade were so great, that after they were subdued and spoiled, lands, provisions, and merchandise, bore double the price at Rome. If Pliny may be credited, the conqueror, by reinstating the conquered in this source of opulence, which was calculated rather to flatter their vanity than to aggrandize their power, gained twenty thousand per cent. Though it is easy to see that this calculation

calculation is exaggerated, we may from thence form a conjecture of what profits must have been reaped in those distant ages, when the Indians were not so well acquainted with their own interest.

WHILE the Romans had virtue enough to preserve the power acquired by their ancestors, Egypt very much contributed to support the dignity of the empire by the riches it brought thither from India. But the fulness of luxury, like the corpulency of the body, is a symptom of approaching decay. This vast empire sunk under its own weight, and, like levers of wood or metal whose excessive length contributes to their weakness, broke into two parts.

EGYPT was annexed to the eastern empire, which lasted longer than that of the west; not being attacked so soon, or with so much vigour. If riches could have supplied the place of courage, its situation and resources would even have made it invincible. But the inhabitants of this empire had nothing except stratagem to oppose against an enemy, who, beside the enthusiasm of a new religion, were animated with all the strength of an uncivilized people. A torrent thus increasing, as it destroyed every thing in its passage, was not to be stopped by so slight a barrier. In the seventh century it laid waste several provinces, and Egypt amongst the rest; which after having been one of the principal empires of antiquity, and the model of all modern monarchies, was at length destined to sink into a state of languor and oblivion, in which it remains to this day.

THE Greeks comforted themselves under this misfortune, on finding that the wars of the Saracens had diverted the stream of the Indian commerce from Alexandria to Constantinople, by two well-known channels. One of these was the Euxine or black sea, where it was usual to embark to go up the
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the Phasis. Large vessels were at first employed, and afterwards smaller ones were introduced, which sailed as far as Serapanna; from whence, in four or five days, the merchants conveyed their commodities by land-carriage to the river Cyrus, which falls into the Caspian sea. Having crossed this tempestuous ocean, they arrived at the mouth of the Oxus, which extended almost as far as the source of the Indus, and from whence they returned the same way, laden with the treasures of Asia. Such was one of the means of communication between this continent, always naturally rich, and that of Europe, which was then poor, and ruined by its own inhabitants.

THE other channel of communication was more easy. The Indian vessels, sailing from different coasts, passed the Persian gulph, and arrived at the banks of the Euphrates, where they unloaded their cargo; which, from this river, was in one day sent by land-carriage to Palmyra. This city, the ruins of which still preserve an idea of its opulence, transported this merchandize through the deserts to the confines of Syria. By this rich commerce, it became more flourishing than could have been expected from its sandy situation. Since its destruction, the caravans, after some changes, constantly took the road of Aleppo, which, by means of the port of Alexandretta, turned the current of wealth to Constantinople, that was at length become the general market of the productions of India.

THIS advantage might alone have retarded the fall of the empire, and, perhaps, have restored it to its ancient grandeur: but that grandeur had been acquired by its arms, its virtues, and its frugal manners; and it was now destitute of all those means of maintaining its prosperity. The Greeks, corrupted by the prodigious accession of wealth, which their
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exclusive commerce poured in upon them almost without any care or activity of their own, abandoned themselves to an indolent and effeminate way of life, which infallibly leads to luxury; fond only of the trivial amusements of glittering shows, and the voluptuous refinements of art; of futile, obscure, and sophistical disquisitions on matters of taste, sentiment, and even religion and politics. They could suffer themselves to be oppressed, but knew not how to assert their right to be properly governed; and alternately made their court to tyrants by the most abject adulation, or irritated them by a faint resistance. These people were bought by the emperors, who sold them to all the monopolizers who aimed to enrich themselves by the ruin of the state. The government, still more corrupted than its subjects, suffered its navy to decay, and placed its whole dependence on the treaties it entered into with the strangers, whose ships frequented its ports. The Italians had insensibly engrossed the article of transportation, which the Greeks had for a long time kept in their own hands. This branch of business, which is rather laborious than profitable, was doubly useful to a trading nation, whose chief riches consist in maintaining their vigour by labour. Indolence hastened the destruction of Constantinople, which was pressed and surrounded on all sides by the conquests of the Turks. The Genoese fell into the precipice which their perfidy and avarice had dugged for them. Mohammed the second drove them from Caffa, to which place they had, of late years, drawn the greatest part of the Asiatic trade.

THE Venetians did not wait for this event to give them an opportunity of reviving their connections with Egypt. They had experienced more indulgence than they expected from a government established since the last crusades, and nearly resembling that of Algiers.

Algiers. The Mammelucs, who at the time of these wars had taken possession of a throne they had hitherto supported, were for the most part slaves brought from Circassia in their infancy, and trained up early to a military life. The supreme authority was vested in a chief, and a council composed of four-and-twenty principal persons. This military corps, which else would unavoidably have enervated, was recruited every year, by a multitude of brave adventurers, who flocked from all parts, with a view of making their fortune. These needy people were prevailed upon, by a sum of money and promises, to consent that their country should be made the mart of Indian merchandise. Thus they were bribed into a measure, which the political interest of their state always required them to adopt. The inhabitants of Pisa and Florence, the Catalans, and the Genoese, received some benefit from this change; but it was of signal advantage to the Venetians, by whose management it was effected. Affairs were in this situation when the Portuguese made their appearance in India.

THIS great event, and the consequences that immediately followed it, occasioned much uneasiness at Venice. This republic, so celebrated for its wisdom, had lately been disconcerted by a league which it could not oppose, and certainly did not foresee. Several princes of different interests who were rivals in power, and had pretensions of an opposite nature, united, in defiance of all the rules of justice and policy, to destroy a state which had not given any of them the least umbrage; and even Lewis the XIIth, whose interest was most concerned in the preservation of Venice, brought it to the brink of ruin by the victory of Aignadelle. The quarrels which must necessarily arise among such allies, joined to the prudence of the republic, saved it from this danger; which, though

more imminent in appearance, was, in fact, not so great nor so immediate as that they were now exposed to by the discovery of a passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope.

VENICE soon perceived that her commerce, and consequently her power, was on the point of being transferred to the Portuguese. Every expedient was tried that an able administration could suggest. Some of the skilful emissaries, which the state took care to retain and employ dexterously in all places, persuaded the Arabs settled in their country, and those that were dispersed over India, or the eastern coast of Africa, that as their interest was equally concerned with that of Venice, they ought to unite with her against a nation, which had made itself mistress of the common source of their riches.

THE rumour of this league reached the Sultan of Egypt, whose attention was already awakened by the misfortunes he felt, as well as those he foresaw. The customs, which constituted a principal branch of his revenue, and by which five per cent. was levied on the importation, and ten on the exportation of Indian goods, began to bring in little or nothing. The frequent bankruptcies, which were the necessary consequence of the embarrassment of affairs, exasperated mens minds against the government, which is always responsible to the people for the calamities they endure. The militia, which was ill paid, fearing that their pay would be still more precarious, raised mutinies, which are more to be dreaded on the decline of a state, than in the time of its prosperity. Egypt was equally a sufferer by the trade carried on by the Portuguese, and by the obstructions their own was exposed to by their encroachments.

THE Egyptians might have extricated themselves from these inconveniencies by fitting out a fleet; but the red sea afforded no materials for the building of ships. The Venetians removed this obstacle by sending wood, and other materials to Alexandria. They were conveyed by the Nile to Cairo, from whence they were carried by camels to Suez. From this celebrated port, in the year 1508, four large vessels, one galleon, two gallies, and three galliots, sailed to India.

THE Portuguese, who foresaw this confederacy, had the preceding year laid a scheme to prevent it, by making themselves masters of the red sea: secure, that with this advantage they should have nothing to fear from this connection, nor from the combined forces of Egypt and Arabia. With this view, they formed a plan to seize upon the island of Socotora, well known by the name of Dioscorides to the ancients; from the abundance and excellence of its aloes. It lies in the gulph of the red sea, a hundred and eighty leagues from the straits of Babelmandel formed by the Cape of Guardafui on the African side, and by the Cape of Fartack on the side of Arabia.

The Portuguese make themselves masters of the red sea.

TRISTAN D'ACUGNA sailed from Portugal with a considerable armament to attack this island. Upon his landing, he was encountered by Ibrahim, son of the king of the people of Fartack, who was sovereign of part of Arabia and Socotora. This young prince was killed in the engagement; the Portuguese besieged the only town that was in the island, and carried it by storm, though it was defended to the last extremity by a garrison superior in number to their small army. The soldiers that composed this garrison determined not to survive the son of their sovereign, refused to capitulate, and were all, to the

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last man, put to the sword. D'Acugna's troops, by their intrepidity, proved an over-match for their bravery.

THIS successful enterprize was not attended with the advantages that were expected from it. It was found that the island was barren, that it had no port, and that the ships that came from the red sea never touched there, though they could not enter the gulph without taking an observation of it. Accordingly, the Egyptian fleet found a safe passage into the Indian ocean, where it joined that of Cambaya. These united armaments had the advantage of the Portuguese, who were considerably weakened by the great number of vessels they had lately fitted out to carry merchandise to Europe. This triumph, however, did not last long; the conquered party got reinforcements, and regained their superiority, which they ever after preserved. The armaments, which continued to come from Egypt, were always beaten and dispersed by the small Portuguese squadrons that cruized at the entrance of the gulph.

As, however, these skirmishes kept up a constant alarm, and occasioned some expence, Albuquerque thought it incumbent on him to put an end to them by the destruction of Suez. But a thousand obstacles opposed the execution of this project.

THE red sea, which takes its name from the corals, madrepores, and marine plants, which cover the bottom of it almost throughout; or, perhaps, only from the sand which discolours its waters, is bordered on one side by Arabia, and on the other by Upper Ethiopia and Egypt. It measures six hundred and eighty leagues from the island of Socotora to the famous isthmus, which unites Africa to Asia. As its length is very considerable, and its breadth small, and no river falls into it of sufficient force to counter-act

act the influence of the tide, it is more affected by the motions of the great ocean, than any of the inland seas nearly in the same latitude. It is not much exposed to tempests; the winds usually blow from the north and south, and being periodical like the monsoons in India, invariably determine the season of sailing into or out of this sea. It may be divided into three parts; the middle division is open and navigable at all times, its depth being from twenty-five to sixty fathoms. The other two, which lie nearer the land, though they abound in rocks, are more frequented by the neighbouring nations; who being obliged to keep close to the shore on account of the smallness of their vessels, never launch out into the principal channel, unless they expect a squall of wind. The difficulty, not to say impossibility, of landing in the harbours on this coast, makes the navigation dangerous for vessels of large burthen, not to mention the great number of desert islands they meet with in their passage, which are barren and afford no fresh water.

ALBUQUERQUE, notwithstanding his abilities, experience and resolution, could not surmount so many obstacles. After entering a considerable way into the red sea, he was obliged to return with his fleet, which had suffered perpetual hardships, and been exposed to the greatest dangers. He was prompted by a restless and cruel spirit of enterprize, to employ methods for the accomplishment of his designs, which, though of a still bolder cast, he thought could not fail of success. He wanted to prevail with the emperor of Ethiopia, who solicited the protection of Portugal, to turn the course of the Nile so as to open a passage for him into the red sea. Egypt would then have become in a great measure uninhabitable, or at least unfit for commerce. In the mean time he proposed to transport into Arabia, by the gulph of Persia, three or four hundred

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hundred horse, which he though would be sufficient to plunder Medina and Mecca. He imagined that by so bold an expedition, he should strike terror into the Mohammedans, and put a stop to that prodigious concourse of pilgrims which was the chief support of a trade he wanted totally to extirpate.

OTHER enterprizes of a less hazardous nature, and attended with more immediate advantage, led him to postpone the ruin of a power, whose influence as a rival was the only circumstance necessary to be guarded against at the present juncture. The conquest of Egypt by the Turks, a few years after, made it requisite to act with the greatest precaution. Those men of genius, who were well qualified to pursue the series of events which had preceded and followed the discovery of the passage by the Cape of Good Hope, and to form deep conjectures concerning the revolutions which this new track of navigation must necessarily prevent, could not help considering this remarkable transaction as the most important æra in the history of the world.

EUROPE began to recover its strength by slow degrees, and to shake off the yoke of slavery, which had disgraced its inhabitants from the time of the Roman conquests down to the institution of the feudal laws. Innumerable tyrants, who kept multitudes in a state of oppression and slavery, had been ruined by the folly of the crusades. To defray the expences of these wild expeditions, they were obliged to sell their land and castles, and for a pecuniary consideration to allow their vassals some privileges, which at length almost re-instated them in the order of human beings. From that time the right of property began to be introduced among private persons, and gave them that kind of independence, without which, property itself is a mere illusion. Thus the first dawnings of liberty in Europe

Europe were, however unexpectedly, owing to the crusades; and the rage of conquest for once contributed to the welfare of mankind.

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IF Vasco de Gama had not made his discoveries, the spirit of liberty would have been again extinguished, and probably without hopes of a revival. The Turks had lately expelled those savage nations, who, pouring from the extremities of the globe, had driven out the Romans, to become, like them, the scourges of human kind; and our barbarous institutions would have been followed by oppressions still more intolerable. This must inevitably have been the case, if the savage conquerors of Egypt had not been repulsed by the Portuguese in their several expeditions to India. Their possession of the riches of Asia would have secured their claim to those of Europe. As the trade of the whole world was in their hands, they must consequently have had the greatest maritime force that ever was known. What opposition could our continent then have made to the progress of a people whose religion and policy equally animated them to conquest?

DISSENTIONS prevailed in England on account of its liberties; France contended for the interests of its sovereigns; Germany for those of its religion; and Italy was employed in adjusting the mutual claims of a tyrant and an impostor. Europe, over-run with fanatics and armies, resembled a sick person, who falling into a delirium, in the transport of madness opens his veins till he faints with loss of blood and spirits. In this state of weakness and anarchy, it was ill prepared to resist the inroads of the Turks.

As the calm which succeeds the violence of civil wars makes a nation formidable to its neighbours; so the dissention which divide it as certainly expose it to ravage and oppression. The depraved morals of
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the clergy would likewise have favoured the introduction of a new worship; and we should have been condemned to a state of slavery without any hopes of relief. In truth, there is not one among all the political and religious systems that oppress mankind, which allows so little scope to liberty as that of the Mussulmen. Throughout almost all Europe, a religion foreign to government, and introduced without its patronage; rules of morality dispersed without order or precision in obscure writings, capable of an endless variety of interpretations; authority engrossed by priests and princes, who are perpetually contesting their right to rule over their fellow-creatures; political and civil institutions daily formed in contradiction to the prevailing religion, which condemns ambition and inequality of rank; a turbulent and enterprising administration, which, in order to tyrannize with a higher hand, is perpetually setting one part of the state at variance with the other: all these principles of discord must necessarily keep the minds of men in constant agitation. Is it surprising that on the view of this tumultuous scene, nature alarmed should rise up in our hearts, and cry out, "Is man born free?"

BUT when men once became slaves to a religion which consecrates tyranny by establishing the throne upon the altar; which seems to check the sallies of ambition by encouraging voluptuousness, and cherishes a spirit of indolence by forbidding the exercise of the understanding: there is no reason to hope for any considerable revolutions. Thus the Turks, who frequently strangle their master, have never entertained a thought of changing their government. This is an idea beyond the reach of minds enervated and corrupted like theirs. Hence it appears, that the whole world would have lost its liberty, had not the most superstitious, and, perhaps, the

the most enslaved nation in Christendom checked the progress of the fanaticism of the Mohammedans, and put a stop to the career of their victories, by depriving them of those sources of wealth which were necessary to the success of their enterprizes. Albuquerque went still further; not satisfied with having taken effectual measures to prevent any vessel from passing from the Arabian sea to the Indian ocean, he attempted to get the command of the Persian gulph.

At the mouth of the strait of Mocandon, which leads into the Persian gulph, lies the island of Gombroon. In the eleventh century an Arabian conqueror built upon this barren rock the city of Ormus, which afterwards became the capital of an empire, comprehending a considerable part of Arabia on one side, and of Persia on the other. Ormus had two good harbours, and was large and well fortified; its riches and strength were entirely owing to its situation. It was the center of trade between Persia and India; which was very considerable, if we remember that the Persians at that time caused the greatest part of the merchandise of Asia to be conveyed to Europe from the ports of Syria and Caffa. At the time of the arrival of the foreign merchants, Ormus afforded a more splendid and agreeable scene than any city in the east. Persons from all parts of the globe exchanged their commodities, and transacted their business, with an air of politeness and attention which are seldom seen in other places of trade.

THESE manners were introduced by the merchants belonging to the port, who engaged foreigners to imitate their affability. Their address, the regularity of their police, and the variety of entertainments which their city afforded, joined to the interests of commerce, invited merchants to make it a place of resort. The streets were covered with mats, and in some places with

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with carpets ; and the linen awnings which were suspended from the tops of the houses prevented any inconvenience from the heat of the sun. Indian cabinets ornamented with gilded vases, or china filled with flowering shrubs, or aromatic plants, adorned their apartments. Camels laden with water were stationed in the public squares. Persian wines, perfumes, and all the delicacies of the table were furnished in the greatest abundance, and they had the music of the east in its highest perfection. Ormus was crowded with beautiful women from all parts of Asia, who were instructed from their infancy in all the arts of varying and heightening the pleasures of voluptuous love. In short, universal opulence, an extensive commerce, a refined luxury, politeness in the men, and gallantry in the women, united all their attractions to make this city the seat of pleasure.

ALBUQUERQUE, on his arrival in India, began to ravage the coasts, and to plunder the towns that belonged to the jurisdiction of Ormus : though these inroads, which shewed more of the robber than of the conqueror, were naturally repugnant to Albuquerque's character, he thought himself obliged to have recourse to them, in order to induce a power he was not in a condition to subdue by force, to submit voluntarily to the yoke he wanted to impose. As soon as he imagined the alarm was spread sufficiently to favour his design, he appeared before the capital, and summoned the king to acknowledge himself tributary to Portugal, as he was to Persia. This proposal was received in the manner it deserved. A fleet composed of ships from Ormus, Arabia, and Persia, came to an engagement with Albuquerque's squadron, who with five vessels destroyed the whole armament. The king, discouraged by his ill success, consented that the conqueror

queror should erect a fort which might command the city and both its harbours. BOOK
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ALBUQUERQUE, who knew the importance of seizing the present conjuncture, carried on the work with the utmost expedition. He laboured as hard as the meanest of his followers; but this spirit of activity could not prevent the enemy from taking notice of the smallness of his numbers. Atar, who, in consequence of the revolutions so frequent in the east, had been raised from the condition of a slave to that of a prime minister, was ashamed of having sacrificed the state to a handful of adventurers. As his talent lay rather in the arts of policy than of war, he determined to repair the ill consequences of his timidity by stratagem. By the arts of insinuation and bribery, he succeeded so far in sowing dissensions among the Portuguese, and prejudicing them against their leader, that they were frequently ready to take arms against each other. This animosity, which increased every day, determined them to reembark at the instant they were informed that a plot was concerted to massacre them. Albuquerque, whose spirit rose superior to opposition and discontent, resolved to starve the place, and deprive it of succours by cutting off all communication. It must certainly have fallen into his hands, had not three of his captains shamefully abandoned him, and gone off with their ships. To justify their desertion, they were guilty of still blacker perfidy, in accusing their general of the most atrocious crimes.

THIS treachery obliged Albuquerque to defer the execution of his design for some time, till he had all the national troops at his command. As soon as he was appointed viceroy, he appeared before Ormus with so strong an armament, that a debauched court and an effeminate people, finding it in vain to make any resistance, were obliged to submit. The sovereign of Persia

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Persia had the confidence to demand tribute of the conqueror. Albuquerque ordered some bullets, grenades, and sabres to be produced to the envoy, telling him, that this was the kind of tribute paid by the king of Portugal.

AFTER this expedition, the power of the Portuguese was so firmly established in the Arabian and Persian gulphs, and on the Malabar coast, that they began to think of extending their conquests into the eastern parts of Asia.

The Portuguese form a settlement at Ceylon.

ALBUQUERQUE's first attempt was on the island of Ceylon, which is eighty leagues long, and thirty at its greatest breadth. It was anciently known by the name of Taprobane. We have no accounts transmitted to us of the revolutions it has undergone. All that history relates worthy of remark is, that the laws were formerly held in so high esteem, that the monarch was under the same obligation of observing them as the meanest of his subjects. If he violated them, he was condemned to death; with this mark of distinction, however, that he did not suffer in an ignominious manner. He was denied all intercourse, all the comforts and supports of life: and, in this kind of excommunication, miserably ended his days.

WHEN the Portuguese landed in Ceylon they found it well peopled, and inhabited by two nations, who differed from each other in their manners, their government, and their religion. The Bedas, who were settled in the northern parts of the island, where the country was less fertile, were distinguished into tribes, which considered themselves as so many families headed by a chief, whose power was not absolute. They go almost naked, and, upon the whole, their manners and government are the same with that of the Highlanders in Scotland. These tribes, who unite for the common defence, have always bravely fought for their liberty,

liberty, and have never invaded that of their neighbours. Their religion is little known, and it is uncertain whether they have any form of worship. They have little intercourse with strangers; keep a watchful eye over those who travel through the district they inhabit; treat them well, and send them away as soon as possible. This caution is owing in part to the jealousy the Bedas entertain of their wives, which contributes to estrange them from all the world. They seem to be the first inhabitants of the island.

THE southern part is possessed by a more numerous and powerful people, called Cinglassés. This nation is polite, in comparison of the other. They wear clothes, and live under an arbitrary government. They have a distinction of casts, as well as the Indians; but their religion is different. They acknowledge one supreme being, and in subordination to him divinities of the second and third order: all which have their priests. Among the deities of the second order, particular honours are paid to Buddou, who descended upon earth to take upon himself the office of mediator between God and mankind. The priests of Buddou are persons of great consequence in Ceylon. They are never punishable by the prince, even for an attempt against his life. The Cinglassés understand the art of war. They know how to take advantage of the natural security their mountains afford against the attacks of the Europeans, whom they have often conquered. Like all people in arbitrary states, they are deceitful, selfish, and full of compliment. They have two languages: one peculiar to the people the other to the learned. Wherever this custom prevails, it furnishes priests and princes with a further opportunity of imposing upon mankind.

BOTH these nations enjoyed the benefits of the fruits, the corn, and the pasture which abounded in the island.

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They had elephants without number; precious stones, and the only kind of cinnamon that was ever esteemed. On the northern coast, and on the fishing coasts which borders upon it, was carried on the greatest pearl fishery in the east. The harbours of Ceylon were the best in India, and its situation was superior to all its other advantages.

IT should seem to have been the interest of the Portuguese to have placed all their strength in this island. It lies in the center of the east; and is the passage that leads to the richest countries. All the ships that come from Europe, Arabia and Persia, cannot avoid paying a kind of homage to Ceylon; and the monsoons, which alternately blow from different points, make it easy for vessels to come in and go out at all seasons of the year. It might have been well peopled and fortified with a small number of men, and at very little expence. The numerous squadrons that might have been sent out from every port in the island would have kept all Asia in awe; and the ships that might cruize in those latitudes, would have intercepted the trade of other nations.

THE viceroy overlooked these advantages. He also neglected the coast of Coromandel, though richer than that of Malabar. The merchandise of the latter was of an inferior quality: it produced plenty of provisions, a small quantity of bad cinnamon, some pepper and cardamon, a kind of spice much used by the eastern people. The coast of Coromandel furnished the finest cottons in the world. Its inhabitants, who for the most part were natives of the country, and had less intercourse with the Arabians and other nations, were the most humane and industrious of all the people in Indostan. To this we may add, that the passage along the coast of Coromandel towards the north, leads to the
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mines of Golconda: besides that, this coast is admirably situated for the trade of Bengal and other countries.

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NOTWITHSTANDING this, Albuquerque made no settlement there. The settlements of St. Thomas and Negapatan were not formed till afterwards. He knew that this coast was destitute of harbours, and inaccessible at certain periods of the year, when it would be impossible for the fleets to protect the colonies. In short, he thought that when the Portuguese had made themselves masters of Ceylon, a conquest begun by his predecessor d'Almeida, and afterwards completed, they might command the trade of Coromandel, if they got possession of Malacca. He therefore determined to make the attempt.

THE country, of which Malacca is the capital city, is a narrow tract of land, about a hundred leagues in length. It joins to the continent towards the northern coast, where it borders on the state of Siam, or, more properly, the kingdom of Johor, which has been separated from it. The rest is surrounded by the sea, and divided from the island of Sumatra by a channel which is called the straits of Malacca.

The Portuguese conquer Malacca.

NATURE had amply provided for the happiness of the Malays, by placing them in a mild, healthy climate, where refreshing gales and cooling streams allay the fervour of the torrid zone; where the soil pours forth an abundance of delicious fruits to satisfy the wants of a savage life; and where it is capable of answering, by cultivation, all the necessary demands of society; where the trees wear an eternal verdure, and the flowers bloom in a perpetual succession; where the most delicate and fragrant odours breathing from aromatic plants, perfume the air, and infuse a spirit of voluptuous delight into all living beings.

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BUT while nature has done every thing in favour of the Malays, society has done them every possible injury. Such has been the influence of a tyrannical government, that the inhabitants of the happiest country in the universe have become remarkable for the ferocity of their manners. The feudal system, which was first planned among the rocks and woods of the north, has extended itself even to the forests and mild regions of the equator, where every thing conspires to promote the enjoyment of a long life of tranquillity, which can only be shortened by a too frequent and excessive indulgence in pleasures. This enslaved nation is under the dominion of an arbitrary prince, or rather of twenty tyrants, his representatives. Thus the despotism of a sultan seems to extend its oppressive influence to multitudes, by being divided among a number of powerful vassals.

THIS turbulent and oppressive scene gave rise to an universal savageness of manners. In vain did heaven and earth shower their blessings upon Malacca; these blessings only served to make its inhabitants ungrateful and unhappy. The masters let out their services, or rather those of their dependents, for hire, to the best bidder, regardless of the loss that agriculture would sustain for want of hands. They preferred a wandering and adventurous life, either by sea or land, to industry. This people had conquered a large Archipelago, well known in the east by the name of the Malayan Islands. The numerous colonies that were transplanted thither, carried with them their laws, their manners, their customs, and, what is something remarkable, the softest language in all Asia.

THE situation of Malacca had, however, made it the most considerable market in India; its harbour was constantly crowded with vessels either from Japan, China,

China, the Philippine and Molucca islands, and the adjacent part of the eastern coast; or from Bengal, Coromandel, Malabar, Persia, Arabia, and Africa. These merchants carried on a safe trade among themselves, or with the inhabitants: the passion of the Malays for plunder had at length given way to advantages of a more certain nature than the precarious and doubtful success of piratical expeditions.

THE Portuguese were desirous of having a share in the general commerce of Asia. At first they appeared at Malacca in the character of merchants; but their usurpations in India rendered their designs so much suspected, and the animosity of the Arabians had circulated reports so much to their disadvantage, that measures were taken to destroy them. They fell into the snares that were laid for them; several of them were massacred, and others thrown into prison. Those who escaped got back to their ships, and retreated to the Malabar coast.

THOUGH Albuquerque did not intend to wait for a rupture to afford him a pretence of seizing Malacca, he was not displeased at this incident, since it gave his enterprize an appearance of justice that might lessen the odium which such a step must naturally have drawn upon the Portuguese name. As an impression so favourable to his views might be weakened by delay, he did not hesitate a moment to take his revenge. The enemy expected a sudden blow; and accordingly, when he appeared before the place, in the beginning of the year 1511, he found every thing in readiness to receive him.

BUT formidable as these preparations appeared, there was a still greater obstacle, which for some days damped the valour of the christian general; his friend Araújo had been taken prisoner in the first expedition, and the enemy threatened to put him to death the

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moment the siege should begin. Albuquerque, who did not want sensibility, paused at the prospect of his friend's danger, when he received the following billet: *Think of nothing but the glory and advantage of Portugal; if I cannot contribute towards your victory, at least let me not be the means of preventing it.* The place was attacked and carried after several doubtful, bloody, and obstinate engagements. They found in it immense treasure, vast magazines, and whatever could contribute to the elegancies and pleasures of life; and a fort was erected there to secure the conquest.

As the Portuguese contented themselves with the possession of the city, the inhabitants, who professed a kind of corrupt Mohammedism, and were unwilling to submit to their new masters, either retired into the inland parts, or dispersed themselves along the coast. Having lost the spirit of commerce, they relapsed into all the excesses of their violent character. These people never go without a poniard, which they call *crid*. The invention of this murderous weapon seems to have exhausted all the powers of their sanguinary genius. Nothing is more to be dreaded than such men armed with such an instrument. When they get on board a vessel, they stab all the crew at the time when no harm is suspected. Since their treachery has been known, all the Europeans take care never to employ a Malayan sailor; but these barbarians, who always made it a rule to attack the weaker party, have now changed this ancient custom, and, animated by an unaccountable resolution to kill or be killed, come in boats with thirty men to board our vessels, and sometimes succeed in carrying them off: if they were repulsed, they have the satisfaction, at least, of having imbrued their hands in blood.

PEOPLE who derive from nature such inflexible bravery, may be exterminated, but cannot be subdued by force. They are only to be civilized by humane treatment,

ment, by the allurements of riches or liberty, by the influence of virtue and moderation, and by a mild government. They must be restored to their rights, or left to themselves, before we can hope to establish any intercourse with them. To attempt to reduce them by conquest, is, perhaps, the last method that should be tried; as it will only increase their abhorrence of a foreign yoke, and discourage them from entering into any social engagements. Nature has placed certain people in the midst of the ocean, like lions in the deserts, that they may enjoy their liberty. Tempests, sands, forests, mountains and caverns, are the places of refuge and defence to all independent beings. Civilized nations should take care how they invade the rights, or rouse the spirits of islanders and savages: as they may be assured that they will become cruel and barbarous to no purpose; that their ravages will make them detested; and that disgrace and revenge are the only laurels they can expect to obtain.

AFTER the reduction of Malacca, the kings of Siam, Pegu, and several others, alarmed at a conquest so fatal to their independence, sent ambassadors to congratulate Albuquerque, to make him an offer of their trade, and to desire an alliance with Portugal.

AFFAIRS being in this situation, a squadron was detached from the fleet to the Moluccas. These islands, which lie in the Indian ocean near the equinoxial, are ten in number, including as usual those of Banda. The largest is not more than twelve leagues in circumference, and the others are much smaller.

Settlement
of the Por-
tuguese in
the Moluc-
ca islands.

It is not known who were the first inhabitants; but it is certain that the Javans and the Malays have successively been in possession of them. At the beginning of the sixteenth century they were inhabited by a kind of savages, whose chiefs, though honoured with

the title of kings, possessed only a limited authority, totally dependent on the caprice of their subjects. They had of late years joined the superstitions of Mohammedism to those of Paganism, which they had professed for a considerable time. Their indolence was excessive. Their only employment was hunting and fishing; and they were strangers to all kind of agriculture. They were encouraged in their inactivity by the advantages they derived from the cocoa tree.

THE cocoa is a tree whose roots are so slender and so superficial, that it is frequently blown down by the wind. Its trunk, which rises to the height of thirty or forty feet, is straight, of a middling thickness, and every where of the same diameter. It is of so spongy a nature, that it is unfit for ship-timber, or for any building that requires solidity. The tuft is composed of ten or twelve leaves, which are large, long, and thick, and are made use of in covering the roofs of houses. From this tuft, which is renewed thrice every year, at every renewal there arise very large buds, from each of which hang ten or twelve cocoas, which, including their shells, are more than half a foot in diameter. The outer coat of the nut consists of filaments, which are used for coarse stuffs, and ship cables. Of the next coat, which is very hard, are made small cups, and other domestic utensils. The inside of this shell is filled with a white firm pulp, from which is expressed an oil much used in India. It is sweet, as long as it continues fresh, but it contracts a bitter taste when it is kept long, and is then only proper for burning. The sediment that remains in the press, affords nourishment for cattle, poultry, and even the lower kind of people in times of scarcity. The pulp of the cocoa contains a liquid which is extremely refreshing, and quenches the thirst of labouring

bouring people both at sea and land. This liquor is very wholesome, but has a sweet insipid taste.

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WHEN these buds are cut at the extremity, vessels are placed to receive the white liquor that distils from them; which if drawn off before sun-rise, and drunk while it is fresh, has the flavour of sweet wine. It afterwards turns sour, and makes good vinegar. When distilled in its highest perfection, it produces a strong brandy: and boiled with quick-lime, yields a middling kind of sugar. The trees from which this liquor has been extracted, bear no fruit; the juices being exhausted, which serve to produce and nourish the kernel.

BESIDES this tree, which is common in all parts of India, the Moluccas produce a singular plant, which is called sago. This tree affords a nutriment from its trunk and vital substance, its fruit being a superfluous and useless part. It grows wild in the forests, and multiplies itself by seeds and suckers. It rises to the height of thirty feet, and is about six in circumference. The bark is an inch thick. The inner rind is composed of an assemblage of long fibres which are interwoven with each other. This double coat contains a kind of sap or gum, which falls into meal. The tree, which seems to grow merely for the use of man, points out the meal by a fine white powder which covers its leaves, and is a certain sign of the maturity of the sago. It is then cut down to the root, and sawn into scatlings, which are divided into four quarters, for the better extracting of the sap or meal they contain. After this substance has been diluted in water, it is strained through a kind of sieve, which retains the grosser particles; the rest is thrown into earthen moulds, where it dries and hardens for some years. The Indians eat the sago diluted with water, and sometimes baked or boiled. Through a principle of humanity, they reserve the finest part of this meal for the

the aged and infirm. A jelly is sometimes made of it, which is white and of a delicious flavour.

TEMPERATE, independent, and averse from labour, these people had lived for ages upon the meal of the sago, and the milk of the cocoa, when the Chinese landing by accident at the Moluccas, discovered the clove and the nutmeg, with which valuable spices the ancients were entirely unacquainted. They were soon admired all over India, from whence they were transported to Persia and Europe. The Arabians, who at that time engrossed almost all the trade of the universe, did not overlook so lucrative a part of it. They repaired in crowds to the celebrated islands, whose productions they had already monopolized, had not the Portuguese, who pursued them every where deprived them of this branch of trade. Notwithstanding the schemes that were laid to supplant these conquerors, they obtained permission to build a fort. From this time the court of Lisbon ranked the Moluccas among the number of their provinces, and it was not long before they became such in reality.

WHILE Albuquerque's lieutenants enriched their country with the new productions of the east, that general completed the conquest of Malabar, which would have taken advantage of his absence to recover its liberty. After his late success, he employed the leisure he enjoyed in the midst of his conquests, in suppressing the licentiousness of the Portuguese; establishing order in all the colonies, and regulating the discipline of the army; in the course of which he displayed an activity, sagacity, wisdom, justice, humanity, and disinterestedness, which did honour to his character. His good qualities made so deep an impression on the minds of the Indians, that, for a long time after his death, they continued to repair to his tomb to demand justice for the outrages committed by

by his successors. He died at Goa in the year 1515, without riches, and out of favour with Emanuel, who had been prevailed upon to entertain suspicions of his conduct.

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IF our astonishment is raised at the number of Albuquerque's victories, and the rapidity of his conquests, how deservedly do those brave men claim our admiration, whom he had the honour to command in these expeditions! Did any nation, with so slender a force, ever perform such great actions? The Portuguese, with less than forty thousand troops, struck terror into the empire of Morocco, the barbarous nations of Africa, the Mammelucs, the Arabians, and all the eastern countries from the island of Ormus to China. With a force in the proportion of one to a hundred, they engaged troops, which, when attacked by an enemy of equal strength, would frequently defend their lives and possessions to the last extremity. What kind of men then must the Portuguese have been, and what extraordinary causes must have conspired to produce such a nation of heroes!

The causes
of the enterprising
spirit of the
Portuguese.

THEY had been at war with the Moors near a century, when Henry of Burgundy, with several French knights, landed in Portugal with a design to serve in Castile under the famous Cid, whose reputation had drawn them thither. The Portuguese invited them to lend their assistance against the infidels; the knights complied, and the greatest part of them settled in Portugal. Chivalry, which has contributed as much as any other institution to exalt human nature, substituting the love of glory to the love of our country; that refined spirit, drawn from the dregs of the barbarous ages, and calculated to repair or lessen the errors and inconveniences of the feudal government from whence it took its rise, was then revived on the banks of the Tagus, in all the splendour it had at its
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first appearance in France and England. The princes endeavoured to keep it alive, and to extend its influence by establishing several orders formed upon the plan of the ancient ones, and calculated to infuse the same spirit, which was a mixture of heroism, gallantry, and devotion.

THE sovereigns raised the spirit of the nation still higher by treating the nobility in some measure upon a footing of equality, and by setting bounds to their own authority. They frequently assembled their states general, without which, properly speaking, there can be no nation. By these states Alphonso was invested with the regal authority after the taking of Lisbon; and in conjunction with them, his successors, for a long time, exercised the power of making laws. Many of these laws were calculated to inspire the love of great actions. The order of nobility was conferred upon those who had distinguished themselves by signal services; by killing or taking prisoner the enemy's general, or his squire: or by refusing to purchase their liberty, when in the hands of the Moors, by renouncing their religion. On the other hand, whoever insulted a woman, gave false evidence, broke his promise, or "disguised the truth to his sovereign," was deprived of his rank.

THE wars waged by the Portuguese in defence of their rights and liberties, were at the same time religious wars. They partook of that fierce yet enterprising fanaticism, which the popes had encouraged at the time of the crusades. The Portuguese, therefore, were knights armed in defence of their properties, their wives, their children, and their kings, who were knights as well as themselves. Besides these, they were the heroes of the crusade, who in defending christianity were fighting for their country. To this may be added, that the nation was small, and its power extremely limited;

limited ; it being chiefly in little states that we find that enthusiastic fondness for their country, which is utterly unknown in larger communities, that enjoy a greater security.

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THE principles of activity, vigour, and a noble elevation of mind, which united in the character of this nation, were not lost after the expulsion of the Moors. They pursued these enemies of their religion and government into Africa. They were engaged in several wars with the kings of Castile and Leon ; and during the interval that preceded their expeditions to India, the nobility lived at a distance from cities and the court, and preserved in their castles the virtues of their ancestors, together with their portraits.

WHEN the plan of extending conquest in Africa and Asia became the object of attention among the Portuguese ; a new passion co-operated with the principles just mentioned, to give additional energy to the Portuguese spirit. This passion, which, however it might animate all the rest for the present, would soon destroy the generosity of their temper, was avarice. The vessels were crowded with adventurers, who wanted to enrich themselves, serve their country, and make proselytes. They appeared in India to be something more than men till the death of Albuquerque. Then riches, which were the object and reward of their conquests, introduced an universal corruption. The nobler passions gave way to the pleasures of luxury, which never fail to enervate the body, and to destroy the virtues of the mind. The weak successors of the illustrious Emanuel, and the men of mean abilities, which he himself sent as viceroys to India, gradually contributed to the degeneracy of the Portuguese.

LOPEZ SOAREZ, however, who succeeded Albuquerque, pursued his designs. He abolished a barbarous

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Arrival of
the Portu-
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China.
State of this
empire.

ous custom that prevailed in the country of Travancor, in the neighbourhood of Calicut. The inhabitants of this region consulted forcerers concerning the destiny of their children: if the magician promised a happy destiny, they were suffered to live; if he foretold any great calamities that were to befall them, they were put to death. Soarez interposed to preserve these children. He was for some time employed in preventing the opposition with which the Portuguese were threatened in India; and as soon as he was relieved from his anxiety, he resolved to attempt a passage to China.

THE great Albuquerque had formed the same design. He had met with Chinese ships and merchants at Malacca, and conceived a high opinion of a nation whose very sailors had more politeness, a better sense of decorum, more good nature and humanity, than were at that time, to be found among the European nobility. He invited the Chinese to continue their commerce with Malacca. From them he procured a particular account of the strength, riches, and manners of their extensive empire, and communicated his intelligence to the court of Portugal.

THE Chinese nation was utterly unknown in Europe. Mark Paul, a Venetian, who had travelled to China by land, had given a description of it which was looked upon as fabulous. It corresponded, however, with the particulars since transmitted by Albuquerque. Credit was given to this officer's testimony, and to his account of the lucrative trade that might be carried on with this country.

IN the year 1518 a squadron sailed from Lisbon to convoy an ambassador to China. As soon as it arrived at the islands in the neighbourhood of Canton, it was surrounded by Chinese vessels, which came to reconnoitre it. Ferdinand Andrada, who commanded

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it, did not attempt to defend himself: he suffered the Chinese to come on board; communicated the object of his voyage to the Mandarins that presided at Canton, and sent his ambassador on shore, who was conducted to Peking.

THE ambassador was every moment presented with some new wonder, that struck him with amazement. If we consider the largeness of the towns the multitude of villages, the variety of canals, of which some are navigable across the empire, and others contribute to the fertility of the soil; the art of cultivating their lands, and the abundance and variety of their productions; the sagacious and mild aspect of the inhabitants, the perpetual interchange of good offices which appeared in the country and on the public roads, and the good order preserved among those numberless crowds who were engaged in the hurry of business; we shall not wonder at the surprize of the Portuguese ambassador, who had been accustomed to the barbarous and ridiculous manners of Europe.

LET us take a transient view of this people. The history of a nation so well governed, is the history of mankind: the rest of the world resembles the chaos of matter before it was wrought into form. After a long series of devastation, society has at length risen to order and harmony. States and nations are produced from each other, like individuals, with this difference, that in families nature brings about the death of some, and provides for the births of others, in a constant and regular succession: but in states, this rule is violated and destroyed by the disorders of society, where it sometimes happens that ancient monarchies stifle rising republics in their births, and that a rude and savage people, rushing like a torrent, sweep away multitudes of states, which are disunited and broken in pieces.

CHINA alone has been exempted from this fatality. This empire, bounded on the north by Russian Tartary, on the south by India, by Thibet on the west, and by the ocean on the east, comprehends almost all the eastern extremity of the continent of Asia. It is eighteen hundred leagues in circumference. It is said to have lasted through a successive series of four thousand years; nor is this antiquity in the least to be wondered at. The narrow bounds of our history, and the small extent of our kingdoms, which rise and fall in a quick succession, are the consequence of wars, superstition, and the unfavourable circumstances of our situation. But the Chinese, who are encompassed and defended on all sides by seas and deserts, have, like the ancient Egyptians, given a lasting stability to their empire. Since their coasts and the inland parts of their territories have been peopled and cultivated, this happy nation must of course have been the center of attraction to all the surrounding people; and the wandering or cantoned tribes must necessarily have gradually attached themselves to a body of men, who speak less frequently of the conquests they have made, than of the attacks they have suffered; and are happier in the thought of having civilized their conquerors, than they could have been in that of having destroyed their invaders.

In a country where the government is so ancient, we may every where expect to find deep traces of the continued force of industry. Its roads have been levelled with the exactest care; and, in general, have no greater declivity than is necessary to facilitate the watering of the land, which they consider, with reason, as one of the greatest helps in agriculture. They have but few, even of the most useful trees, as their fruits would rob the corn of its nourishment. There are gardens, it is true, interspersed with flowers, fine turf,

turf, shrubberies, and fountains; but however agreeable these scenes might be to an idle spectator, they seem to be concealed and removed from the public eye, as if the owners were afraid of shewing how much their amusements had encroached upon the soil that ought to be cultivated for the support of life. They have no parks or extensive forests, which are not near so serviceable to mankind by the wood they furnish, as prejudicial by preventing agriculture; and while they contribute to the pleasure of the great by the beasts that range in them, prove a real misfortune to the husbandman. In China, the beauty of a country-seat consists in its being happily situated, surrounded with an agreeable variety of cultivated fields, and interspersed with trees planted irregularly, and with some heaps of a porous stone, which at a distance have the appearance of rocks or mountains.

THE hills are generally cut into terraces, supported by dry walls. Here there are reservoirs, constructed with ingenuity, for the reception of rain and spring water. It is not uncommon to see the bottom, summit and declivity of a hill watered by the same canal, by means of a number of engines of a simple construction, which save manual labour, and perform with two men what could not be done with a thousand in the ordinary way. These heights commonly yield three crops in a year. They are first sown with a kind of radish, which produces an oil; then with cotton, and after that with potatoes. This is the common method of culture; but the rule is not without exception.

UPON most of the mountains which are incapable of being cultivated for the subsistence of man, proper trees are planted for building houses or ships. Many of them contain iron, tin, and copper mines, sufficient to supply the empire. The gold mines have been

been neglected, either because their produce did not defray the expence of working them, or because the gold dust, washed down by the torrents, was found sufficient for the purposes of exchange.

THE sandy plains, saved from the ravages of the ocean, (which changes its bed as rivers do their course, in a space of time so exactly proportioned to their different moments, that a small encroachment of the sea causes a thousand revolutions on the surface of the globe) form, at this day, the provinces of Nankin and Tchekiang, which are the finest in the empire. As the Egyptians checked the course of the Nile, the Chinese have repulsed, restrained, and given laws to the ocean. They have re-united to the continent, tracts of land which had been disjoined by this element. They still exert their endeavours to oppose that over-ruling effect of the earth's motion, which in conformity with the celestial system drives the ocean from east to west. To the action of the globe the Chinese oppose the labours of industry: and while nations, the most celebrated in history, have, by the rage of conquest, increased the ravages that time is perpetually making upon this globe; they exert such efforts to retard the progress of universal devastation, as might appear supernatural, if daily experience did not afford us strong evidence to the contrary.

To the improvements of land this nation adds, if we may be allowed the expression, the improvement of the water. The rivers, which communicate with each other by canals, and run under the walls of most of the towns, present us with the prospect of floating cities, composed of an infinite number of boats filled with people, who live constantly upon the water, and whose sole employment is fishing. The sea itself is covered with numberless vessels, whose masts, at a distance,

distance, appear like moving forests. Anson mentions it as a reproach to the fishermen belonging to these boats, that they did not give themselves a moment's intermission from their work to look at his ship, which was the largest that had ever anchored in those latitudes. But this inattention to an object, which appeared to a Chinese sailor to be of no use, though it was in the way of his profession, is, perhaps, a proof of the happiness of a people, who prefer business to matters of mere curiosity.

THE manner of culture is by means uniform throughout this empire, but varies according to the nature of the soil and the difference of the climate. In the low countries towards the south they sow rice, which being always under water, grows to a great size, and yields two crops in a year. In the inland parts of the country, where the situation is lofty and dry, the soil produces a species of rice, which is neither so large, so well-tasted, or so nourishing, and makes the husbandman but one return in the year for his labour. In the northern parts the same kinds of grain are cultivated as in Europe, which grow in as great plenty, and are of as good a quality as in any of our most fertile countries. From one end of China to the other, there are large quantities of vegetables, particularly in the south, where together with fish they supply the place of meat, which is the general food of the other provinces. But the improvement of lands is universally understood and attended to. All the different kinds of manure are carefully preserved, and skilfully distributed to the best advantage; and that which arises from fertile lands, is applied to make them still more fertile. This grand system of nature, which is sustained by destruction and re-production, is better understood and attended to in China than in any other country in the world.

A PHILOSOPHER,

A PHILOSOPHER, whom the spirit of observation has led into their empire, has found out and explained the causes of the rural œconomy of the Chinese.

THE first of these causes is that character of industry by which these people are particularly distinguished, who in their nature require a less share of repose. Every day in the year is devoted to labour, except the first, which is employed in paying and receiving visits among relations; and the last, which is sacred to the memory of their ancestors. The first is a social duty, the latter a part of domestic worship. In this nation of sages, whatever unites and civilizes mankind is religion; and religion itself is nothing more than the practice of the social virtues. These sober and rational people want nothing more than the controul of civil laws to make them just; their private worship consists in the love of their parents whether living or dead; and their public worship in the love of labour; and that labour which is held in the most sacred veneration is agriculture.

THE generosity of two of their emperors is much revered, who, preferring the interests of the state to those of their family, kept their own children from the throne to make room for men taken from the plough. They revere the memory of these husbandmen, who sowed the seeds of the happiness and stability of the empire in the fertile bosom of the earth; that inexhaustible source of whatever conduces to the nourishment, and consequently to the increase of mankind.

IN imitation of these royal husbandmen, the emperors of China become husbandmen officially. It is one of their public functions to break up the ground in the spring; and the parade and magnificence that accompanies this ceremony, draws together all the farmers in the neighbourhood of the capital. They flock in crouds to see their prince perform this solemnity

nity in honour of the first of all the arts. It is not, as in the fables of Greece, a god, who tends the flocks of a king; it is the father of his people, who, holding the plough with his own hands, shews his children what are the true riches of the state. In a little time he repairs again to the field he has ploughed himself, to sow the seed that is most proper for the ground. The example of the prince is followed in all the provinces; and at the same seasons, the viceroy repeats the same ceremonies in the presence of a numerous concourse of husbandmen. The Europeans, who have been present at this solemnity at Canton, never speak of it without emotion; and make us regret that this festival, whose political aim is the encouragement of labour, is not established in our climate, instead of that number of religious feasts, which seem to be invented by idleness to make the country a barren waste.

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It is not to be imagined, however, that the court of Pekin is really engaged in the labours of a rural life. The arts of luxury are grown to so great a height in China, that these performances can only pass for mere ceremonies. But the law which obliges the prince to shew this token of respect to the profession of husbandmen, has a tendency to promote the advantage of agriculture. The deference paid by the sovereign to public opinions contributes to perpetuate them; and the influence of opinion is the principal spring that actuates the political machine.

THIS influence is preserved in China by conferring honours on all husbandmen, who excel in the cultivation of the ground. When any useful discovery is made, the author of it is called to court to communicate it to the prince; and is sent by the government into the provinces, to instruct them in his method. In a word, in this country, where nobility is not

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hereditary,

hereditary, but a mere personal reward indiscriminately bestowed upon merit; several of the magistrates and persons raised to the highest employments in the empire are chosen out of families who are solely employed in the cultivation of land.

THESE encouragements which belong to their manners, are further seconded by the best political institutions. Whatever is in its nature incapable of being divided, as the sea, rivers, canals, &c. is enjoyed in common, and is the property of no individual. Every one has the liberty of going upon the water, fishing, and hunting; and a subject who is in possession of an estate, whether acquired by himself or left by his relations, is in no danger of having his right called in question by the tyrannical authority of the feudal laws.

THE smallness of the taxes is still a further encouragement to agriculture. Till lately, the proportion paid to government out of the produce of the lands, was from a tenth down to a thirtieth part of the income, according to the quality of the soil. This was the only tribute levied in China. The leading men never entertained a thought of increasing it; they would not have ventured to act in such direct opposition to custom and opinion, which determine every thing in this empire. Some emperors and ministers, no doubt, would have been glad to attempt an innovation of this kind; but as such an undertaking would require time, and they could not hope to live to see its success, they did not choose to engage in it. Men of bad principles aim at immediate enjoyment, while the virtuous subject, extending his benevolence beyond the present generation, contents himself with forming designs, and propagating useful truths, without expecting to reap any advantage from them in his own person.

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IN THE EAST AND WEST INDIES.

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It is but lately that conquest and commerce have introduced new taxes into China. The Tartar emperors have laid a duty upon certain articles of provisions, metals, and merchandise. In short, if we may believe the Jesuit Amyot, customs are established there as well as in Europe.

It were to be wished, that the Europeans would imitate the Chinese in the mode of levying their taxes; which is just, humane, and not expensive. Every year, at the time of harvest, the fields are measured, and rated in proportion to their actual produce. Whether the Chinese are as dishonest as they are represented, or whether, like several nations among the ancients, they are only faithless and deceitful in their dealings with strangers, I shall not take upon me to determine; but it should seem that government reposes sufficient confidence in them, not to vex and molest them by those searchings and troublesome visits, so common in the mode of taxation in Europe. The only penalty inflicted on persons liable to be taxed, and who are too slow in the payment of the tribute demanded by the public, is to quarter old, infirm, and poor people upon them, to be maintained at their expence, till they have discharged the debt due to government. This manner of proceeding has a tendency to awaken pity and humanity in the breast of a citizen, when he sees miserable objects and hears the cries of hunger; instead of giving him disgust, and exciting his resentment by forcible seizures and the menaces of an insolent soldiery, who come to live at discretion in a house exposed to the numberless extortions of the treasury.

In China, the taxes are levied without having recourse to those oppressive methods that are practised in Europe. The mandarins take the the tenth part of the produce of the earth in kind. The officers in

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the municipal towns give in their account of this tribute and all other taxes to the receiver-general of the province; and the whole is lodged in the public treasury. The use that is made of this revenue prevents all frauds in collecting it; as it is well known, that a part of these duties is allotted for the maintenance of the magistrates and soldiers. The money arising from the sale of this proportion of the product of the lands is never issued from the treasury but in public exigencies. It is laid up in the magazines against times of scarcity, when the people receive what they had lent, as it were, in times of plenty.

It may naturally be expected that a nation, enjoying so many advantages, will be extremely populous; especially in a climate where, whatever reason may be assigned for it, the women are remarkably prolific, and the men do no injury to the natural vigour of their constitution by the use of strong liquors; where the climate is wholesome and temperate, and few children die in proportion to the numbers born; where the soil overpays the labour of cultivating it, not to mention the simple and plain manner of living in use there, which is regulated by the strictest economy.

THE Jesuits, however, who were employed by the court of Pekin to make charts of the empire, in the course of their undertaking discovered some considerable tracts of desert land, which had escaped the notice of the merchants who frequented only the sea ports, and of travellers who went only by the road of Canton to the capital.

It would be impossible to account for the want of population in some parts of China distant from each other, if it were not known, that, in these extensive states, a great number of children are destroyed soon after they are born; that several of those who escape
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this cruel fate, suffer the most shameful mutilation; and that of those who are not thus barbarously robbed of their sex, many are reduced to a state of slavery, and deprived of the comforts of marriage by tyrannical masters; that polygamy, so contrary to reason and the spirit of society, is universally practised; that the vice which nature rejects with the utmost abhorrence, is very common; and that the convents of the Bonzes contain little less than a million of persons devoted to celibacy.

BUT if a few scattered *districts*, which are hardly known even in China, be destitute of hands to cultivate them; are there not many more in which men are crowded together in such numbers as to incommode each other? This inconvenience is observable in the neighbourhood of great cities and public roads, and particularly in the southern provinces. Accordingly it appears, by the records of the empire, that a bad harvest has seldom failed to produce an insurrection.

WE need go no further to find the reasons which prevent despotism from making any advances in China. It is evident from these frequent revolutions, that the people are fully sensible that a regard to the rights of property, and submission to the laws, are duties of a lower class, subordinate to the original rights of nature, and that communities are formed for the common benefit of those who enter into them. Accordingly, when the more immediate necessities of life fail, the Chinese cease to acknowledge an authority which does not provide for their subsistence. The right of kings is founded on the regard they pay to the preservation of the people. Neither religion nor morality teach any other doctrine in China.

THE emperor is well aware, that he presides over a people who submit to the laws no longer than while they

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they promote their happiness. He is sensible, that if the spirit of tyranny, which is so common and infectious in other countries, should seize him but for a moment, such a violent opposition would be raised that he would be expelled from the throne. Accordingly, finding himself invested with the supreme authority by a people who observe and criticise his conduct, he is far from attempting to erect himself into an object of religious superstition, and doing just as he pleases. He does not violate the sacred contract by virtue of which he holds the sceptre. He is convinced that the people are so well acquainted with their rights, and the manner of defending them, that whenever a province complains of the mandarin who governs it, he recalls him without examination, and delivers him up to a tribunal, which proceeds against him if he is in fault; but should he even prove innocent, he is not reinstated in his employment, as it is deemed a crime to have drawn upon himself the resentment of the people. He is considered as an ignorant tutor, who should attempt to deprive a father of the love his children bear him. This compliance, which, in other countries, would nourish perpetual discontent, and occasion an infinite number of intrigues, is not attended with any inconvenience in China, where the inhabitants are naturally disposed to be mild and just, and the constitution of the state is so ordered, that its delegates have seldom any rigorous commands to execute.

THE necessity of justice in the prince tends to make him more wise and intelligent. He is in China what one would gladly believe princes in all countries were, the idol of his people. It should seem that their manners and laws conspired to establish this fundamental principle, that China is a family of which the emperor is the patriarch. He does not possess his authority

rity as a conqueror, or a legislator, but as a father he governs, rewards, and punishes. This pleasing sentiment gives him a greater power than the tyrants of other nations can possibly derive from the number of their troops, or the artifices of their ministers. It is not to be imagined what esteem and affection the Chinese have for their emperor, or, as they express it, their common, their universal father.

THIS public veneration is founded upon that which is established by private education. In China, the father and mother claim an absolute right over their children at every period of life, even when raised to the highest dignity. Paternal authority and filial affection are the sources of every thing in this empire : by these the manners are regulated, and they are the grand tie that unites the prince to his subjects, the subjects to their prince, and citizens to one another. The Chinese government has gradually arrived at that point of perfection, from which all others seem to have finally and irrevocably degenerated : I mean the patriarchal government, a government established by nature itself.

NOTWITHSTANDING this sublime system of morals, that for so many ages has contributed to the prosperity of the Chinese empire, it would probably have experienced an insensible change, if the chimerical distinctions allowed to birth had destroyed that original equality established by nature among mankind, and which ought only to give place to superior abilities and superior merit. In all the states of Europe, one class of men assume from their infancy a pre-eminence independent of their moral character. The attention paid them from the moment of their birth, gives them the idea that they are formed for command ; they soon learn to consider themselves as a distinct species, and being secure of a certain rank
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rank and station, take no pains to make themselves worthy of it.

THIS system, to which we owe so many indifferent ministers, ignorant magistrates, and bad generals has no place in China, where nobility does not descend by hereditary right. The figure any citizen makes, begins and ends with himself. The son of the prime minister of the empire has no advantages at the moment of his birth, but those he may have derived from nature. The rank of nobility is sometimes conferred upon the ancestors of a man who has done signal services to his country; but this mark of distinction, which is merely personal, dies with its possessor, and his children derive no other advantage from it than the memory and example of his virtues.

IN consequence of this perfect equality, the Chinese are enabled to establish an uniform system of education, and to inculcate correspondent principles. It is no difficult task to persuade men who are upon an equal footing by birth, that they are all brethren. This opinion gives them every advantage which would be lost if a contrary idea prevailed. A Chinese, who should abstract himself from this common fraternity, would become a solitary and miserable being, and wander as a stranger in the heart of his country.

INSTEAD of those frivolous distinctions which are allotted to birth in almost every other country, the Chinese substitute real ones, founded entirely on personal merit. A set of wise and intelligent men, who are honoured with the title of the learned mandarins, devote themselves to the study of all sciences necessary to qualify them for the administration of public affairs. None can be admitted into this respectable society, who are not recommended by their talents and knowledge: for riches give no claim

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to this honour. The mandarins are at their option to fix upon proper persons to associate with them; and they never chuse any person without a previous and strict examination. There are different classes of mandarins, the succession to which is regulated by merit, and not by seniority.

OUT of the class of mandarins, the emperor, according to a custom as ancient as the empire, elects ministers, magistrates, governors of provinces, and officers of every denomination who are called to any employment in the state. As his choice can only fall upon men of tried abilities, the welfare of the people is always lodged in the hands of those who are worthy of such a trust.

IN consequence of this institution, no dignity is hereditary except that of the crown; and even that does not always devolve to the eldest son; but to him whom the emperor and the council of mandarins judge most worthy. By this method, a spirit of virtuous emulation prevails even in the imperial family. The throne is given to merit alone, and it is assigned to the heir only in consideration of his abilities. The emperors rather chuse to appoint a successor from a different family, than to intrust the reins of government to unskilful hands.

THE viceroys and magistrates enjoy the affection of the people, at the same time that they partake of the authority of the sovereign; and any mistakes in their administration meet with the same indulgence that is shewn to those of the supreme legislator. They have not that tendency to sedition which prevails in this part of the world. In China there is no sett of men to form or manage a faction: as the mandarins have no rich and powerful family connections, they can derive no support but from the crown, and their own prudence.

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dence. They are trained up in a way of thinking that inspires humanity, the love of order, beneficence, and respect for the laws. They take pains to inculcate these sentiments into the people, and secure their attachment to every law, by shewing them its useful tendency. The sovereign passes no edict that does not convey some moral or political instruction. The people necessarily become acquainted with their interests, and the measures taken by government to promote them; and the better informed they are, the more likely they will be to remain quiet.

SUPERSTITION, which excites disturbances in all other countries, and either establishes tyranny, or overthrows government, has no influence in China. It is tolerated injudiciously, perhaps, by the laws: but, at least, it never makes laws itself. No person can have any share in the government who does not belong to the class of literati, which admits of no superstition. The bonzes are not allowed to ground the duties of morality upon the doctrines of their sects, nor consequently to dispense with them. If they impose upon some part of the nation, their artifices do not affect those whose example and authority are of the greatest importance to the state.

CONFUCIUS, in whose actions and discourses precept was joined to example, whose memory is equally revered, and whose doctrine is equally embraced by all classes and sects whatsoever, was the founder of the national religion of China. His code contains a system of natural law, which ought to be the groundwork of all religions, the rule of society, and standard of all governments. He taught that reason was an emanation of the Deity; and that the supreme law consisted in the harmony between nature and reason. The religion that runs in opposition to these two guides of human life, does not come from heaven.

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As the Chinese have no term for God, they say that heaven is God. *But*, says the emperor Changchi, in an edict published in 1710, *it is not to the visible and material heaven that we offer our sacrifices, but to the Lord of heaven.* Thus atheism, though not uncommon in China, is not publicly professed. It is neither the characteristic of a sect, nor an object of persecution; but is tolerated as well as superstition.

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THE emperor, who is sole pontiff, is likewise the judge in matters of religion; but as the national worship was made for the government, not the government for it; and as both were designed to be subservient to the ends of society; it is neither the interest nor inclination of the sovereign to employ the twofold authority lodged in his hands, for the purposes of oppression. If on the one hand the doctrines and ceremonies of the hierarchy do not prevent the prince from making an ill use of absolute authority; he is more powerfully restrained on the other, by the general influence of the national manners.

ANY attempt to change these manners would be attended with the greatest difficulty, because they are inculcated by a mode of education which is, perhaps, the best we are acquainted with. The Chinese do not make a point of instructing their children till they are five years old. They are then taught to write words or hieroglyphics, which represent sensible objects, of which at the same time they endeavour to give them clear ideas. Afterwards their memory is stored with sententious verses containing precepts of morality, which they are taught to reduce to practice. As they advance in years they are instructed in the philosophy of Confucius. This is the manner of education among the ordinary ranks. The children who are designed for posts of honour, begin in the same manner; but

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but intermix other studies relative to human conduct in the different stations of life.

IN China, the manners take their complexion from the laws, and are preserved by common usage, which is likewise prescribed by the laws. The Chinese have a greater number of precepts, relating to the most common actions, than any other people in the world. Their code of politeness is very voluminous; the lowest citizen is instructed in it, and observes it with the same exactness as the mandarins and the court.

THE laws in this code, like all the rest, are formed with a view of keeping up the opinion that China is but one great family, and of promoting that regard and mutual affection in the citizens, which is due to each other as brethren. These rights and customs tend to preserve the manners. Sometimes, indeed, ceremonies are substituted for sentiment; but how often are they the means of reviving it! They compose a kind of constant homage that is paid to virtue; and is calculated to engage the attention of youth. This homage preserves the respect due to virtue herself; and if it sometimes leads to hypocrisy, it encourages at least a laudable zeal. Tribunals are erected to take cognizance of transgressions against the customs; as well as to punish crimes, and reward merit. Moderate penalties are inflicted upon crimes, and virtue is distinguished by marks of honour. Honour is accordingly one of the principles that actuate the Chinese government: and though it is not the leading one, operates more strongly than fear, and more feebly than affection.

UNDER the influence of such institutions, one should expect, that China would be the country in the whole world, where men would be most humane. Accordingly the humanity of the Chinese is conspicuous on those occasions, where it should seem, that
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virtue could have no other object but justice ; and that justice could not be executed without severity. Their prisoners are confined in neat and commodious apartments, where they are well taken care of even to the moment when they suffer. It frequently happens, that the only punishment inflicted on a rich man amounts to no more than obliging him for a certain time to maintain or clothe some old men and orphans at his own expence. Our moral and political romances form the real history of the Chinese, who have regulated all the actions of men with such an exact nicety, that they have scarcely any need of sentiment. Yet they do not fail to cultivate the latter, in order to give a proper estimation to the former.

THE spirit of patriotism, that spirit without which states are mere colonies, and not nations, is stronger, perhaps, and more active among the Chinese than it is found in any republic. It is common to see them voluntarily contributing their labour to repair the public roads: the rich build places of shelter upon them for the use of travellers ; and others plant trees there. Such actions, which are proofs of a beneficent humanity rather than an ostentation of generosity, are far from being uncommon in China.

THERE have been times, when they have been frequent ; and others, when they have been less so ; but the corruption which was the cause of the latter, brought on a revolution, and the manners of the people were reformed. They suffered by the late invasion of the Tartars ; they are now recovering, in proportion as the princes of that victorious nation lay aside the superstitions of their own country, to adopt the principles of the nation they have conquered ; and in proportion as they improve in the knowledge of those books, which the Chinese call canonical.

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IT cannot be long before we see the amiable character of this nation entirely revived; that fraternal, and kindred principle; those enchanting social ties, which soften the manners of the people, and attach them inviolably to the laws. Political errors and vices cannot take deep root in a country where no persons are ever promoted to public employments, but such as are of the sect of the learned, whose sole occupation is to instruct themselves in the principles of morality and government. As long as real knowledge shall be held in estimation, as long as it shall continue to lead to public honours, there will exist among the people of China a fund of reason and virtue, which will not be found among other nations.

IF this picture of the manners of the Chinese should be different from that drawn by other writers, it is not, perhaps, impossible to reconcile opinions so seemingly contradictory. China may be considered in two distinct points of view. If we study the inhabitants as they appear in the sea-ports and great towns, we shall be disgusted at their cowardice, knavery and avarice: but in the other parts of the empire, particularly in the country, we shall find their manners domestic, social and patriotic. It would be difficult to point out a more virtuous, humane, and intelligent people.

IT must, however, be acknowledged, that the greatest part of those improvements, which depend upon theories at all complicated, are not so far advanced there, as might naturally be expected from that ancient, active, and diligent people, who have so long had a clue to them. But this riddle is not inexplicable. The Chinese language requires a long and laborious study, scarcely to be comprehended within the term of a man's life. The rights and ceremonies which they observe upon every occasion, afford more exercise for
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their memory than their sensibility. Their manners are calculated to check the impulses of the soul, and weaken its operations. Too assiduous in the pursuit of what is useful, they have no opportunity of launching out into the extensive regions of imagination. An excessive veneration for antiquity, makes them the slaves of whatever is established. All these causes united, must necessarily have stifled, among the Chinese, the spirit of invention. It requires ages with them to bring any thing to perfection; and whoever reflects on the state, in which arts and sciences were found among them three hundred years ago, must be convinced of the extraordinary antiquity of their empire.

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THE low state of learning, and of the fine arts in China, may perhaps be further owing to the very perfection of its government, and system of policy. This paradox has its foundation in reason. Where the study of the laws holds the first rank in a nation, and is rewarded with an appointment in the administration, instead of a post in the academy; where learning is applied to the regulation of manners, or the maintenance of the public weal; where the same nation is exceedingly populous, and requires a constant attention in its learned members to make subsistence keep an equal pace with population; where every individual, besides the duties he owes to the public, which take a considerable time to be well understood, has particular duties arising from the claims of his family or profession: in such a nation the speculative and ornamental parts of science cannot be expected to arrive at that height of splendour they have attained in Europe. But the Chinese, who are only our scholars in the arts of luxury and vanity, are our masters in the science of good government. They study how to increase, not how to diminish the number of inhabitants.

ONE of the arts in which the Chinese have made the least progress, is that of war. It is natural to imagine, that a nation, whose whole conduct, like that of infants, is influenced by ceremonies, precepts, and customs either of private or public institution, must consequently be pliant, moderate, and inclined to tranquillity both at home and abroad. Reason and reflection, while they cherish sentiments like these, leave no room for that enthusiasm, which constitutes the hero and the warrior. The spirit of humanity, which they imbibe in their tender years, makes them look with abhorrence on those sanguinary scenes of rapine and massacre, that are so familiar to nations of a warlike turn. With such dispositions, can we wonder that the Chinese are not warriors? They have soldiers without number, but totally undisciplined, except in the single article of obedience, being still more deficient in military manœuvres than in courage. In their wars with the Tartars, the Chinese knew not how to fight, and only stood to be killed. Their attachment to their government, their country, and their laws, may supply the want of a warlike spirit, but will never supply the want of good arms, and military skill. When a nation has found the art of subduing its conquerors by its manners, it has no occasion to overcome its enemies by force of arms.

SUCH is the empire of China so much talked of, and so little known. Such it was, when the Portuguese landed there. They might have learned in it lessons of wisdom and government, but they thought of nothing but of enriching themselves, and propagating their religion. Thomas Perez, their ambassador, found the court of Pekin disposed to favour his nation, whose fame had spread itself throughout Asia. It had already attracted the esteem of the Chinese, which the conduct of Ferdinand Andrada, who commanded

manded the Portuguese squadron, tended still further to increase. He visited all the coasts of China, and traded with the natives. When he was on the point of departure, he made proclamation in the ports he had put into, that if any one had been injured by a Portuguese, and would make it known, he should receive satisfaction. The ports of China were now upon the point of being opened to them : Thomas Perez was just about concluding a treaty, when Simon Andrada, brother, to Ferdinand, appeared on the coasts with a fresh squadron. This commander treated the Chinese in the same manner as the Portuguese had, for some time, treated all the people of Asia. He built a fort without permission, in the island of Taman, from whence he took opportunities of pillaging, and extorting money from all the ships bound from or to the ports of China. He carried off young girls from the coast ; he seized upon Chinese men, and made them slaves ; he gave himself up to the most licentious acts of piracy, and the most shameful dissoluteness. The sailors and soldiers under his command, followed his example. The Chinese enraged at these outrages fitted out a large fleet : the Portuguese defended themselves courageously, and escaped by making their way through the enemy's fleet. The emperor imprisoned Thomas Perez, who died in confinement, and the Portuguese nation was banished from China for some years. After this, the Chinese relaxed, and gave permission to the Portuguese to trade at the port of Sancian, to which place they brought gold from Africa, spices from the Molucca islands, and from Ceylon elephants teeth, and some precious stones. In return they took silks of every kind, china, gums, medicinal herbs, and tea, which is since become so necessary a commodity to the northern nations of Europe.

THE Portuguese contented themselves with the huts and factories they had at Sancian, and the liberty granted to their trade by the Chinese government, till an opportunity offered of establishing themselves upon a footing more solid, and less dependent upon the mandarins, who had the command of the coast.

A PIRATE, named Tokang-si-loo, whose successes had made him powerful, had seized upon the island of Macao, from whence he blocked up the ports of China, and even proceeded so far as to lay siege to Canton. The neighbouring mandarins had recourse to the Portuguese, who had ships in the harbour of Sancian; they hastened to the relief of Canton, raised the siege, and obtained a complete victory over the pirate, whom they pursued as far as Macao, where he killed himself.

THE emperor of China being informed of the service the Portuguese had rendered him on this occasion, bestowed Macao on them, as a mark of his gratitude. They received this grant with joy, and built a town which became very flourishing, and was advantageously situated for the trade they soon after entered into with Japan.

IN the year 1542, it happened that a Portuguese vessel was fortunately driven by a storm on the coast of those celebrated islands. The crew were hospitably received, and obtained of the natives every thing they wanted to refresh, and refit them for the sea. When they arrived at Goa, they reported what they had seen, and informed the viceroy, that a new country, not less rich than populous, presented itself to the zeal of missionaries and the industry of merchants. Both missionaries and merchants embarked without delay for Japan.

THEY found a great empire, which is, perhaps, the most ancient of any in the world, except that of China; its annals are not without a great mixture of fable, but it appears beyond a doubt, that in the year

660, Sin-chu founded the monarchy, which has ever since been continued in the same family. These sovereigns, called Dairos, were at the same time the kings, and the pontiffs of the nation; and by virtue of these united powers got the whole extent of the supreme authority into their hands. The person of the Dairos was sacred, they were considered as the descendents, and representatives of the gods. The least disobedience to the most trifling of their laws, was looked upon as a crime scarcely to be expiated by the severest punishments; nor were they confined to the offender alone, his whole family was involved in the consequences of his crime.

ABOUT the eleventh century these princes, who, no doubt, were more jealous of the pleasing prerogatives of priesthood, than of the troublesome rights of royalty, divided the state into several governments, and intrusted the administration of them to such of the nobility as were distinguished for their knowledge and wisdom.

By this means the unlimited power of the Dairos suffered a considerable change. The affairs of the empire were left to fluctuate at all adventures. The restless and quick-sighted ambition of their viceroys took advantage of this inattention to bring about a variety of revolutions. By degrees they began to depart from the allegiance they had sworn to preserve. They made war upon each other, and even upon their sovereign. An absolute independence was the consequence of these commotions; such was the state of Japan, when it was discovered by the Portuguese.

THE great islands, of which this empire is composed, being situated in a tempestuous climate surrounded by storms, agitated by volcanos, and subject to those great natural events which impress terror on the human mind, were inhabited by a people entirely ad-

dicted to superstition, but divided into several sects. That of Xinto is the ancient established religion of the country: it acknowledges a supreme being, and the immortality of the soul; and pays adoration to a multitude of gods, saints, or *camis*, that is to say, the souls of great men, who have been the support and ornament of their country. It is by the authority of this religion, that the Diaro, high-priest of the gods from whom he claimed his descent, had long reigned over his subjects with that despotic sway, with which superstition governs the mind. Being both emperor and high-priest, he had rendered religion, in some respects, useful to his people, which is not absolutely impossible in countries where the sacerdotal and civil power are united in the same person.

It does not appear that the sect of Xinto has had the madness, which of all others is the most dangerous to morality, to fix a criminal stigma on actions innocent in themselves. Far from encouraging that gloomy fanaticism and fear of the gods, which is inspired by almost all other religions, the Xinto sect had applied itself to prevent, or at least to moderate this disorder of the imagination, by instituting festivals, which were celebrated three times in every month. They were dedicated to friendly visits, feasts, and rejoicings. The priests of Xinto taught, that the innocent pleasures of mankind are agreeable to the deity, and that the best method of paying devotion to the *camis* is to imitate their virtues, and to enjoy in this world that happiness they enjoy in another. In consequence of this tenet, the Japanese, after having put up their prayers in the temples, which are always situated in the midst of groves, resorted to courtezans, who commonly inhabited places consecrated to love and devotion, and composed a religious community under the direction of an order of monks, who received a share
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of the profits arising from this pious compliance with the dictates of nature. BOOK
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THE Budzoists are another sect in Japan, of which Budzo was the founder. Their doctrine was nearly the same with that of the sect of Xinto; over which they hoped to gain a superiority by the severity of their morals. Besides Amida, the deity of the Xintoists, the Budzoists worshipped a kind of mediator between God and mankind. They likewise worshipped other mediatorial divinities between men and Amida. The professors of this religion flattered themselves, that they should prevail over the religion of Xinto by the multitude of their precepts, the excess of their austerity, their devotions and mortifications.

THE spirit of Budzoism is dreadful. It breathes nothing but penitence, excessive fear, and cruel severity. Of all fanaticisms it is the most terrible. The monks of this sect oblige their disciples to pass one half of their lives in penance, to expiate imaginary sins; and inflict upon them the greatest part of that penance themselves, with a tyranny and cruelty, of which one may conceive an idea, from the inquisitors in Spain; with this difference, that the Japanese fathers are themselves the butchers of these voluntary victims to superstition; whereas the inquisitors are only the judges of those sins and punishments, which they have themselves devised and invented. The Budzoist priests keep the minds of their followers in a continual state of torture, between remorse and expiations. Their religion is so over-loaded with precepts, that it is not possible to observe them. They represent their gods as always desirous to punish, and always offended.

It may be readily imagined, what effects so horrible a superstition must have on the character of the people, and to what degree of ferocity it hath brought them. The lights of a sound morality, a little philosophy,

sophy, and a prudent system of education might have remedied these laws, this government, and this religion; which conspire to make mankind more savage in society with his own species, than if he lived in the woods, and had no companions but the monsters that roam about the deserts.

IN China, they put into the hands of children books of instruction, which contain a detail of their duties, and teach them the advantages of virtue. The Japanese children are made to get by heart poems in which the actions of their forefathers are celebrated, a contempt of life is inculcated, and suicide is set up as the most heroic of all actions. These songs and poems, which are said to be full of energy and beauty, beget enthusiasm. The Chinese education tends to regulate the soul, and keep it in order: the Japanese, to inflame and excite it to heroism. These are guided through life by sentiment; the Chinese by reason and custom.

THE Chinese aim only at truth in their writings, and place their happiness in a state of tranquillity. The Japanese have a quick relish of pleasures, and would rather suffer, than be without feeling. In fine, the Chinese seem to wish to counteract the violence and impetuosity of the soul; the Japanese to keep it from sinking into a state of languor and inactivity.

IT is natural to imagine that people of this character must be fond of novelty. The Portuguese were accordingly received with all possible demonstrations of joy. All the ports were open to them. All the petty princes of the country invited them to their provinces: each contending who should give them the most valuable advantages, grant them the most privileges, and shew them the greatest civilities. These merchants established a prodigious trade. The Portuguese carried thither the commodities of India which they brought from different markets; and Macao served as a repository

repository for their European goods. Immense quantities of the productions of Europe and Asia were consumed by the Dairo, the usurpers of his rights, the nobles, and the whole nation. But what had they to give in return?

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THE country of Japan is in general mountainous, stony, and by no means fertile. Its produce in rice, barley, and wheat, which are the only crops it admits of, is not sufficient for the maintenance of its numerous inhabitants; who, notwithstanding their activity, foresight, and frugality, must perish with famine, if the sea did not supply them with great quantities of fish. The empire affords no productions proper for exportation; nor do the mechanic arts furnish any article of trade except works in steel, which are the best we are acquainted with.

WERE it not for the advantages it derives from its mines of gold, silver, and copper, which are the richest in Asia, and perhaps in the whole world, Japan could not support its own expences. The Portuguese every year carried off quantities of these metals, to the amount of fourteen or fifteen millions of livres, (upon an average, about 634,000*l*.) They married also the richest of the Japanese heiresses, and allied themselves to the most powerful families.

WITH such advantages, the avarice, as well as the ambition of the Portuguese might have been satisfied. They were masters of the coast of Guinea, Arabia, Persia, and the two peninsulas of India. They were possessed of the Moluccas, Ceylon, and the isles of Sunda, while their settlement at Macao insured to them the commerce of China and Japan.

Extent of
the Portu-
guese domi-
nions in In-
dia.

THROUGHOUT this immense tract, the will of the Portuguese was the supreme law. Earth and sea acknowledged their sovereignty. Their authority was so absolute, that things and persons were dependent upon

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upon them, and moved entirely by their directions. No nation or private person dared to make voyages, or carry on trade, without obtaining their permission and passport. Those who had this liberty granted them, were prohibited from trading in cinnamon, ginger, pepper, timber, iron, steel, lead, tin, and arms, of which the conquerors reserved to themselves the exclusive benefit. A number of valuable articles, by which so many nations have since enriched themselves, and which then bore a higher price on account of their novelty, were entirely ingrossed by the Portuguese. In consequence of this monopoly, the prices of the produce and manufactures both in Europe and Asia were regulated at their discretion.

IN the midst of so much glory, wealth, and conquest, the Portuguese had not neglected that part of Africa, which lies between the cape of Good Hope and the Red sea, and has in all ages been famed for the richness of its productions. The possession of this country was on many accounts an important object: the Arabians had been settled there for several ages, and their numbers were greatly increased. They had formed along the coast of Zanguebar several small independent sovereignties, some of which made a considerable figure, and almost all of them were in good condition. The flourishing state of these settlements was owing to mines of gold and silver, which they found within their respective territories, the produce of which enabled them to purchase the commodities of India. To possess themselves of this treasure, and to deprive their competitors of it, was looked upon by the Portuguese as an indispensable duty. Agreeable to this principle, these Arabian merchants were attacked, and without much difficulty subdued, about the year 1508. Upon their ruin

was

was established an empire, extending from Sofala as far as Melinda, of which the island of Mosambique was made the center. This island is separated from the continent only by a narrow channel, and is no more than two leagues in circumference. Its port, which is excellent, and wants no advantage but a purer air, was fixed upon as a place for the vessels of the conqueror to put in at, and as a staple for all their merchandise. Here they used to wait for those settled winds, which at certain times of the year, blow without intermission from the African to the Indian coasts, as at other times of the year they blow in an opposite direction from the coasts of India to those of Africa.

THESE successes properly improved might have formed a power so considerable, that it could not have been shaken; but the vices and folly of some of their chiefs, the abuse of riches and of power, the wantonness of victory, the distance of their own country, changed the character of the Portuguese. Religious zeal, which had added so much force and activity to their courage, now produced in them nothing but ferocity. They made no scruple of pillaging, cheating, and enslaving the idolaters. They supposed that the Pope, in bestowing the kingdoms of Asia upon the Portuguese monarchs, had not withheld the property of individuals from their subjects. Being absolute masters of the eastern seas, they extorted a tribute from the ships of every country; they ravaged the coasts, insulted the princes, and became in a short time the terror and scourge of all nations.

THE king of Sidor was carried off from his own palace, and murdered with his children, whom he had intrusted to the care of the Portuguese.

AT Ceylon, the people were not suffered to cultivate the earth, except for their new masters, who treated them with the greatest barbarity.

AT

Degeneracy
of the Por-
tuguese in
India.

AT Goa they had established the inquisition, and whoever was rich became a prey to the ministers of that infamous tribunal.

FARIA, who was sent out against the pirates from Malacca, China, and other parts, made a descent on the island of Calampui, and plundered the sepulchres of the Chinese emperors.

SOUZA caused all the pagodas on the Malabar coast to be destroyed, and his people inhumanly massacred the wretched Indians, who went to weep over the ruins of their temples.

CORREA terminated an obstinate war with the king of Pegu, and both parties were to swear on the books of their several religions to observe the treaty. Correa swore on a collection of songs, and thought by this vile stratagem to elude his engagement.

NUNO D'ACUGHNA resolved to make himself master of the island of Daman on the coast of Cambaya; the inhabitants offered to surrender it to him, if he would permit them to carry off their treasures. This request was refused, and Nuno put them all to the sword.

DIEGO DE SILVEIRA was cruising in the Red sea. A vessel richly laden saluted him. The captain came on board and gave him a letter from a Portuguese general, which was to be his passport. The letter contained only these words: *I desire the captains of ships belonging to the king of Portugal to seize upon this moorish vessel, as a lawful prize.*

In a short time the Portuguese preserved no more humanity or good faith with each other than with the natives. Almost all the states, where they had the command, were divided into factions.

THERE prevailed every where in their manners a mixture of avarice, debauchery, cruelty and devotion. They had most of them seven or eight concubines, whom

whom they kept to work with the utmost rigour, and forced from them the money they gained by their labour. Such treatment of women was very repugnant to the spirit of chivalry.

BOOK

I.

THE chiefs and principal officers admitted to their table a multitude of those singing and dancing women, with which India abounds. Effeminacy introduced itself into their houses and armies. The officers marched to meet the enemy in palanquins. That brilliant courage, which had subdued so many nations, existed no longer among them. The Portuguese were with difficulty brought to fight, except where there was a prospect of plunder. In a short time the king of Portugal no longer received the produce of the tribute, which was paid him by more than one hundred and fifty eastern princes. This money was lost in its way from them to him. Such corruption prevailed in the finances, that the tributes of sovereigns, the revenues of provinces, which ought to have been immense, the taxes levied in gold, silver, and spices, on the inhabitants of the continent and islands, were not sufficient to keep up a few citadels, and to fit out the shipping that was necessary for the protection of trade.

It is a melancholy circumstance to contemplate the fall of nations. Let us hasten to the administration of Don Juan da Castro, who restored to the Portuguese some part of their virtue.

CASTRO was a man of much knowledge, considering the age he lived in. He possessed a noble and elevated soul; and the study of the ancients had preserved in him that love of glory and of his country, which was so common among the Greeks and Romans.

IN the beginning of his wise and glorious administration, Cojé-Sophar, minister of Mahmoud king of Cambaya, had inspired his master with a design of attacking the Portuguese. This man, whose father is
said

faid to have been an Italian, and his mother a Greek, had raised himself from slavery to the conduct of the state, and the command of armies. He had embraced Mohammedism, and, though he had really no religion, he knew how to avail himself of the aversion the people had conceived against the Portuguese, on account of the contempt they shewed for the religions of the country. He engaged in his service experienced officers, veteran soldiers, able engineers, and even founders, whom he procured from Constantinople. His preparations seemed intended against the Mogul or the Patans, and when the Portuguese least expected it, he attacked and made himself master of Diu, and laid siege to the citadel.

THIS place, which is situated on a little island upon the coast of Guzarat, had always been considered as the key of India in those times, when navigators never launched beyond the coast; and Surat was the great staple of the east. From the arrival of Gama, it had been constantly an object of ambition to the Portuguese, into whose hands it fell at length in the time of d'Acugna. Mascarenhas, who was governor of it at the juncture we are speaking of, and should have had nine hundred men, had only three: the rest of his garrison, by an abuse very common in those days, were employed in trade at the different towns upon the coast. He must have surrendered, if he had not received immediate assistance. Castro sent him a reinforcement under the command of his son, who was killed in the attack. Cojé-Sophar shared the same fate; but his death did not slacken the operations of the siege.

CASTRO instituted funeral games in honour of those who fell in defence of their country. He congratulated their parents in the name of the government, and received congratulations himself on the death

death of his eldest son. His second presided at the funeral games, and marched immediately after for Diu, to deserve, as it were, the honours he had just been paying to his brother. The garrison repulsed the enemy in every attack, and signalized themselves every day by extraordinary actions. In the eyes of the Indians the Portuguese were more than men. *Happily*, said they, *providence has decreed that there should be but as few of them as there are of tygers and lions, lest they should exterminate the human species.*

CASTRO himself headed a larger reinforcement than those he had sent. He threw himself into the citadel with provisions, and above four thousand men. It was debated, whether they should give battle. The reasons on both sides were discussed. Garcias de Sâ, an old officer, commanded silence; *Ye have all spoken*, said he, *now let us fight.* Castro was of the same opinion. The Portuguese marched out to the enemy's intrenchments, and gained a signal victory. After having raised the siege, it was necessary to repair the citadel. They were in want of money, and Castro borrowed it on his own credit.

AT his return to Goa, he wished to give his army the honours of a triumph after the manner of the ancients. He thought that such honours would serve to revive the warlike spirit of the Portuguese, and that the pomp of the ceremony might have a great effect on the imagination of the people. At his entry the gates of the city were ornamented with triumphal arches; the streets were lined with tapestry; the women appeared at the windows in magnificent habits, and scattered flowers and perfumes upon the conquerors; while the people danced to the sound of musical instruments. The royal standard was carried before the victorious soldiers, who marched in order. The viceroy crowned with branches of palm rode on a superb car:
the

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the generals of the enemy followed it, and after them the soldiers that had been made prisoners. The colours that had been taken from them, were carried in procession reversed and dragging on the ground, and were followed by their artillery and baggage. Representations of the citadel they had delivered, and of the battle they had gained, enhanced the splendour of the spectacle. Verses, songs, orations, firing of cannon, all concurred to render the festival magnificent, agreeable, and striking.

ACCOUNTS of this triumph were brought to Europe. The wits condemned it as ridiculous, the bigots as profane. The queen of Portugal said upon the occasion, *That Castro had conquered like a christian hero, and triumphed like a pagan one.*

THE vigour of the Portuguese, which Castro had re-animated, did not long continue. Corruption made daily advances among the citizens of every class. One of the viceroys set up boxes in the principal towns, in which any person might put memorials and articles of intelligence. Such a method might be very useful, and tend to a reformation of abuses in an enlightened country, where the morals of the inhabitants were not totally spoiled, but among a superstitious and corrupt people of what service could it be?

THE original conquerors of India were none of them now in being, and their country exhausted by too many enterprizes and colonies was not in a capacity to replace them. The defenders of the Portuguese settlements were born in Asia; their opulence, the softness of the climate, the manner of living, and perhaps, the nature of the food, had taken from them much of the intrepidity of their forefathers. At the same time that they gave themselves up to all those excesses which make men hated, they had not courage enough left to make themselves feared. They were

were monsters; poison, fire, assassination, every sort of crime was become familiar to them; nor were they private persons only who were guilty of such practices; men in office set them the example! They massacred the natives; they destroyed one another. The governor, who was just arrived, loaded his predecessor with irons, that he might deprive him of his wealth. The distance of the scene, false witnesses and large bribes secured every crime from punishment.

THE island of Amboyna was the first to avenge itself. A Portuguese had at a public festival seized upon a very beautiful woman, and regardless of all decency, had proceeded to the greatest of outrages. One of the islanders, named Genulio, armed his fellow-citizens; after which he called together the Portuguese, and addressed them in the following manner:

“ To revenge affronts of so cruel a nature as those
 “ we have received from you, would require actions,
 “ not words: yet we will speak to you. You preach
 “ to us a deity, who delights, you say, in generous
 “ actions; but, theft, murder, obscenity, and drunkenness,
 “ are your common practice; your hearts
 “ are inflamed with every vice. Our manners can
 “ never agree with yours: nature foresaw this, when
 “ she separated us by immense seas, and ye have over-
 “ leaped her barriers. This audacity, of which ye
 “ are not ashamed to boast, is a proof of the corruption
 “ of your hearts. Take my advice; leave to
 “ their repose these nations that resemble you so little;
 “ go, fix your habitations among those who are
 “ as brutal as yourselves; an intercourse with you
 “ would be more fatal to us than all the evils which
 “ it is in the power of your God to inflict upon us.
 “ We renounce your reliance for ever: your arms
 “ are superior to ours; but we are more just than you,
 “ and we do not fear you. The Itons are from this
 “ day

“ day your enemies ; fly from their country, and beware how you approach it again.”

THIS harangue, which thirty years before would have brought on the destruction of Amboyna, was listened to with a degree of patience that fully demonstrated what change had taken place among the Portuguese.

EQUALLY detested in every quarter, they saw a confederacy forming to expel them from the east. All the great powers of India entered into the league, and for two or three years carried on their preparations in secret. The court of Lisbon was informed of them ; and the reigning king Sebastian, who, if it had not been for his superstition, would have been a great prince, dispatched Ataida and all the Portuguese, who had distinguished themselves in the wars of Europe, to India.

THE general opinion on their arrival was to abandon the distant settlements, and assemble their forces on the Malabar coast, and in the neighbourhood of Goa. Although Ataida was of opinion that too great a number of settlements had been formed, he did not like the appearance of sacrificing them. *Comrades*, said he, *I mean to preserve all, and so long as I live, the enemy shall not gain an inch of ground.* Immediately upon this he sent succours to all the places that were in danger, and made the necessary dispositions for defending Goa.

THE Zamorin attacked Manjalor, Cochin, and Cananor. The king of Cambaya attacked Chaul, Daman, and Baichaim. The king of Achem laid siege to Malacca. The king of Ternate made war upon the Portuguese in the Moluccas. Agalachem, a tributary to the Mogul, imprisoned the Portuguese merchants at Surat. The queen of Gareopa endeavoured to drive them out of Onor.

ATAIDA,

ATAIDA, in the midst of the care and trouble attending the siege of Goa, sent five ships to Surat, which obliged Agalachem to set the Portuguese, whom he had seized, at liberty. Thirteen ships were dispatched to Malacca; upon which the king of Achem and his allies abandoned the siege. Besides these, Ataida fitted out even the vessels which were employed every year to carry tribute and merchandise to Lisbon. It was represented to him, that instead of depriving himself of the assistance of men who were to go on board this fleet, he should preserve them for the defence of India. *We shall be enough without them*, said he; *the state is in distress, and its hopes must not be disappointed*. This reply surprised his opponents, and the fleet sailed. At the time when the place was most vigorously pressed by Idalcan, Ataida sent troops to the succour of Cochin, and ships to Ceylon. The archbishop, whose authority was unlimited, interposed to prevent it. *Sir*, replied Ataida, *you understand nothing of these affairs; content yourself with recommending them to the blessing of God*. The Portuguese, who came from Europe, exhibited prodigies of valour during this siege. It was oftentimes with difficulty, that Ataida could restrain them from throwing away their lives. Many of them would sally out in the night, contrary to his orders, to attack the besiegers in their lines.

THE viceroy did not depend so entirely on the force of his arms, as to reject the assistance of policy. He was informed, that Idalcan was governed by one of his mistresses, and that she was in the camp with him. Women who devote themselves to the pleasures of princes are generally slaves to ambition, and unacquainted with those virtues which love inspires. The mistress of Idalcan suffered herself to be corrupted, and sold to Ataida her lover's secrets. Idalcan was aware of the treason, but could not discover the traitor. At last, after ten months spent in toil and action,

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his tents destroyed, his troops diminished, his elephants killed, and his cavalry unable to serve; this prince, overcome by the genius of Ataida, raised the siege, and retreated in shame and despair.

ATAIDA marched without delay to the assistance of Chaul, which was besieged by Nizam-al-Muluck, king of Cambaya, at the head of more than a hundred thousand men. The defence of Chaul had been conducted with as much intrepidity as that of Goa. It was followed by a great victory, which Ataida, with a handful of men, obtained over a numerous army, disciplined by a long siege.

ATAIDA, after this, marched against the Zamorin, defeated and obliged him to sign a treaty, by which he engaged never to maintain any ships of war.

THE Portuguese became throughout the east what they were under the immediate conduct of Ataida. A single ship, commanded by Lopez Carasco, fought for three days successively against the whole fleet of the king of Achem. In the middle of the engagement word was brought to Lopez's son, that his father was killed: *we have one brave man the less*, said he; *we must conquer, or deserve to die like him*. Saying this, he took the command of the ship, and forcing his way in triumph through the enemy's fleet, anchored before Malacca.

NOR was courage the only virtue that revived among the Portuguese at this period, so powerful is the ascendant of a great man, even over the most corrupt nations. Thomas de Sofa had got as a slave a beautiful girl, who had not long before been promised to a young man that was in love with her. Hearing of the misfortune of his mistress, he flew to throw himself at her feet, and partake of her chains. Sofa was present at their interview; they embraced, and melted into tears. *I give you your liberty*, said the Portuguese general; *go and live happy elsewhere*.

THE

THE management of the public money was likewise reformed by Ataida, who restrained those abuses, which are most injurious to states, and most difficult to be restrained. But this good order, this returning heroism, this glorious moment, did not survive his administration.

AT the death of Sebastian, Portugal sunk into a kind of anarchy, and was by degrees reduced under the dominion of Philip the Second. From this æra the Portuguese in India ceased to consider themselves as of the same country. Some made themselves independent, others turned pirates, and paid no respect to any flag. Many entered into the service of the princes of the country, and these almost all became ministers or generals, so great were the advantages this nation still maintained over those of India. No Portuguese pursued any other object than the advancement of his own interest: there was no zeal, no union for the common good. Their possessions in India were divided into three governments, which gave no assistance to each other, and even clashed in their projects and interests. Neither discipline, subordination, nor the love of glory, animated either the soldiers or the officers. Men of war no longer ventured out of the ports, or whenever they appeared were badly equipped. Manners became more and more depraved. Not one of their commanders had power enough to restrain the torrent of vice, and the majority of these commanders were themselves corrupted. The Portuguese at length lost all their former greatness, when a free and enlightened nation, actuated with a proper spirit of toleration, appeared in India, and contended with them for the empire of that country.

IT may be affirmed, that at the time when Portugal first made its discoveries, the world was very little acquainted with the political principles of trade,

the real power of different states, the advantages of conquest, the manner of establishing and preserving colonies, and the benefits the mother country might derive from them.

It was a wise project to endeavour to find a passage by Africa to go to India, and to bring merchandise. The benefits which the Venetians derived by less direct roads, had justly excited the emulation of the Portuguese; but it was proper there should be some limits to so laudable an ambition.

THIS small nation becoming on a sudden mistress of the richest and most extensive commerce of the globe, soon consisted of nothing else but merchants, factors, and sailors, who were destroyed by long voyages. Thus the Portuguese lost the foundation of all real power, which consists in agriculture, natural industry, and population; and there was consequently no proportion between their commerce and the means of keeping it up.

THEY carried these destructive measures still further; and, animated with the rage of conquest, extended themselves over a vast tract of land, which no European nation would have been able to preserve, without impairing its own strength.

THUS this small country, which of itself was not very populous, constantly exhausted itself in soldiers, sailors, and inhabitants, sent to supply the colonies.

THE spirit of religious intolerance that prevailed amongst them, would not allow them to admit into the class of their own citizens the people of the east and of Africa, and they were therefore obliged to be perpetually at war with their new subjects.

As the government soon changed its schemes of trade into projects of conquest; the nation, which had never been guided by the true commercial spirit, soon assumed that of rapine and plunder.

TIME-

TIME-PIECES, fire-arms, fine cloths, and other articles, which have been since carried into India, not being then brought to that degree of perfection they have lately acquired, the Portuguese could not carry any thing there but money. They soon grew tired of this, and took away from the Indians by force what they had before obtained by purchase.

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I.

THEN was to be seen throughout the kingdom of Portugal the utmost profusion of riches, joined to the most extreme poverty. The only opulent persons were those who had held some employment in India; while the husbandman, who found no one to assist him in his toil, and the artists, who were unable to procure workmen, being soon compelled to forego their several occupations, were reduced to the lowest state of misery.

ALL these misfortunes had been foreseen. When the discovery of India engaged the attention of Portugal, that court flattered itself that the bare appearance of its ships in that mild climate, would insure the possession of it; that the trade of these countries would prove as inexhaustible a source of riches to the nation, as it had been to those people who had hitherto been masters of it; and that by the treasure arising from it, the state notwithstanding its small extent of territory, would become equal in strength and grandeur to the most formidable powers. There were some, however, who were not misled by these delusive hopes. The most penetrating and moderate of the ministers ventured to affirm, that the consequence of running in search of rich minerals, and glittering merchandize, would be an inattention to objects of real advantage, agriculture, and manufactures; that wars, shipwrecks, epidemical diseases, and other accidents, would weaken the whole empire beyond recovery; that the state thus carried out from
its

B O O K
I.

Present
state of the
Portuguese
affairs in
India.

its center by the impulse of an extravagant ambition, would either by force or art attract the subjects to the most distant parts of Asia; that even if the enterprize succeeded, it would raise a powerful confederacy, which it would be impossible for the crown of Portugal to defeat. Attempts were in vain made, some time after this, to convince these discerning men of their error, by shewing them that the Indians were subdued, the Moors repulsed, and the Turks defeated; and by exhibiting the tide of wealth that flowed into Portugal. Their opinions were too well grounded in experience to be shaken by the report of these flattering successes. They still insisted that a few years would discover the folly of punishing these pursuits to extremity, and that they must inevitably lead to a corruption of morals, and end in ravages and universal confusion. Time, the great arbiter of political matters, has since confirmed their predictions.

OF all the conquests which the Portuguese had made in India, they possess none at present but Macao, Diu, and Goa; and the united importance of these three settlements, in their intercourse with India and Portugal, is very inconsiderable.

MACAO annually sends two vessels to Goa laden with China and other goods, that are rejected at Canton; the owners of which are generally Chinese merchants. These ships bring back as much of the sandal, Indian saffron, ginger and pepper, as one of the frigates belonging to Goa has been able to procure on the southern coast. The vessel which trades to the north carries a part of the cargo that comes from China to Surat, where it takes in some linens, and completes its lading at Diu, which is not what it was formerly. A ship arrives every year from Europe, which procures at Goa a small and indifferent cargo, consisting of goods picked up from China, Guzarat,

zarat, and a few English factories, and sells them at Mofambique, Brasil, Angola, or the capital.

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I.

SUCH is the declining state into which the Portuguese affairs in India are fallen, from that pinnacle of glory to which they had been raised by the bold adventurers who discovered, and the intrepid heroes who conquered that country. The scene of their glory and opulence is become that of their ruin and disgrace. Their situation, however, is not so desperate as it may appear. Their remaining possessions are more than sufficient to entitle them to a large share in the affairs of India. But this change can only be effected by the aids of philosophy and a spirit of liberty. If the Portuguese knew their true interests, if their ports were declared free, and those who settled in them had their fortunes and the liberty of conscience secured to them; Indians who are now oppressed by their government, and Europeans who are injured by their monopolizing companies, would resort to their settlements in great numbers, and their flag, which has long been despised, would again become respectable. Their power cannot, however, be equal to that of the Dutch, a persevering and considerate people, whose enterprizes we now proceed to relate.

B O O K II.

The settlements, wars, policy, and trade of the Dutch in the East-Indies.

BOOK
II.

THE republic of Holland has, from its first rise, been an object of universal admiration, and cannot fail to engage the curiosity and attention of the remotest posterity. Its inhabitants have on all occasions distinguished themselves by their industry and enterprising genius; but are particularly celebrated for their knowledge of maritime affairs, and their expeditions to the continent of India. Before we attend them in their progress to these opulent and extensive regions, let us trace their history to its earliest æra. Such a retrospect is peculiarly proper in a work of this nature, as it will comprehend at one glance, all those characteristic marks by which the genius of a nation is distinguished. It is necessary that a reader who reflects may be enabled to judge of himself, if the original state of this nation were such as afforded a presage of its future power; and whether the heroic associates of Civilis, who defied the Roman power, did not transfuse their spirit into those brave republicans, who, under the auspices of Nassau, opposed the dark and odious tyranny of Philip the Second.

Ancient
revolutions
in Holland.

It is a fact established by the best historical authority, that in the century preceding the christian æra, the Battæ, dissatisfied with their situation in Hesse, settled upon

upon the island formed by the Naal and the Rhine ; which was marshy, and had few or no inhabitants. They gave the name of Batavia to their new country. Their government was a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Their chief was, properly speaking, nothing more than a principal citizen, whose office was rather to advise than to command. The principal men who exercised jurisdiction, and commanded the troops in their respective districts, were chosen, as well as the kings, in a general assembly. A hundred persons, selected from among the people, presided over every country, and acted as chiefs in the different hamlets. The whole nation was, in some measure, an army always in readiness. Each family composed a body of militia, which served under a captain of its own choosing.

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II.

SUCH was the state of Batavia when Cæsar passed the Alps. This Roman general defeated the Helvetians, several tribes of the Gauls, the Belgæ and Germans, who had crossed the Rhine, and extended his conquests beyond that river. In consequence of this expedition, the boldness and success of which were equally astonishing, the protection of the conqueror was courted on all sides.

SOME writers, too zealous for the honour of their country, affirm that the Batavians entered into an alliance with Rome : but the truth is, they submitted, on condition that they should be governed by their own laws, pay no tribute, and be obliged only to perform military services.

CÆSAR soon distinguished the Batavians from the other nations that were subdued by the Romans. This conqueror of the Gauls, when by Pompey's influence he was recalled to Rome, and refused to obey the senate's orders ; when relying on the absolute authority which his conduct had at length given him over the legions and auxiliaries, he attacked his enemies

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II.

mies in Spain, Italy, and Asia: at this juncture, sensible that the Batavians had a principal share in his victories, he gave them the glorious appellation of *the friends and brethren of the Roman people*.

AFTER this, irritated by the unjust proceedings of certain governors, they obeyed the dictates of that noble impulse, so becoming men of spirit, which prompts them to take arms to revenge an insult. They shewed themselves as formidable enemies, as they were faithful allies; but these troubles subsiding, the Batavians were pacified but not subdued.

WHEN Rome, after having risen to a pitch of greatness unknown before, and which has never since been equalled by any state, no longer retained those manly virtues and strict principles which were the ground-work of that noble superstructure; when her laws had lost their force, her armies their discipline, and her citizens the love of their country: the barbarians, who by the terror of the Roman name had been driven to the north, where they had been confined by force to remain, poured like a torrent into the southern countries. The empire was torn in pieces, and the finest provinces became a prey to those whom the Romans had always either degraded or oppressed. The Franks, in particular, seized upon the countries belonging to the Gauls; and Batavia became a part of that extensive and famous kingdom, which was founded by these conquerors in the fifth century.

THE new monarchy experienced those inconveniences which are almost inseparable from rising states; and are indeed too frequently felt in the best established governments. It was sometimes under the dominion of a single person; and at others was subject to the caprice of a number of tyrants. It was constantly engaged

gaged either in foreign wars, or exposed to the rage of intestine dissensions. Sometimes it made the neighbouring states tremble for their safety ; but much more frequently suffered from the incursions of the northern people who ravaged its provinces. It was equally the victim of the weakness of several of its princes, and of the unbounded ambition of their favourites and ministers. The overbearing spirit of the pontiffs undermined the power of the throne, and their insolence brought both the laws and religion into disgrace. Anarchy and tyranny followed each other so close, that the most sanguine despaired of ever seeing affairs put upon a tolerable footing. The glorious æra of Charlemagne's government was only a transient gleam of light. As his great actions were the effect of his genius, and not in the least owing to the influence of any good institutions ; after his death, affairs returned to that state of confusion from which they had been retrieved by his father Pepin, and more particularly by his own endeavours. The French monarchy, the limits of which he had extended too far, was divided. Germany, to which the Rhine served as a natural barrier, fell to the share of one of his grandsons : and, by an unaccountable arrangement, Batavia, to which the Normans in their excursions had a little before given the name of Holland, was included in that allotment.

In the beginning of the tenth century, the German branch of the Carlovinians became extinct. As the other princes of France had neither courage nor power to assert their rights, the Germans easily disengaged themselves from a foreign yoke. Those of the nation, who, by virtue of a delegated power from the monarch, governed the five circles of which the state was composed, chose a chief out of their own body. This chief fearing lest these powerful men might be tempted to throw off their dependence, if any severer conditions

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II.

conditions were required of them, contented himself with their fidelity and homage, and exacted only such services as they were obliged to by the feudal laws.

AT this memorable juncture, the counts of Holland, who, as well as the rest of the provincial chiefs, had hitherto exercised a precarious and dependent authority, obtained the same rights as the other great vassals of Germany : and as they afterwards enlarged their territories by conquest, marriages, and grants from the emperors, they in time became totally independent of the empire. They were not equally successful in their unjust attempts against the public liberty. Their subjects were not to be intimidated by force, cajoled by flattery, or corrupted by profusion. War and peace, taxes, laws, and treaties were managed by the three united powers of the count, the nobles and the towns. The republican spirit still prevailed in the nation, when by some extraordinary events it fell under the dominion of the house of Burgundy, whose former power, though before considerable, was greatly strengthened by this union.

THOSE who had the sagacity to investigate probabilities, foresaw, that this state, which was formed as it were by the gradual accretion of many others, would one day be of great weight in the political system of Europe. The genius of its inhabitants, its advantageous situation, and its real strength, afforded a most certain prospect of its future greatness. These projects and expectations, which were just ripening into realities, were disappointed by an event, which, though it happens every day, never fails to baffle the designs of ambition. The male line in that house became extinct; and Mary, who was sole heiress to its dominions, by her marriage in 1477, transferred to the house of Austria the advantages that had been gained by several successful struggles,

gles, a great number of intrigues, and some acts of injustice.

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AT this æra, so famous in history, each of the seventeen provinces of the low countries had particular laws, extensive privileges, and almost a distinct government. The excellent principle of union which equally contributes to the welfare and security both of empires and republics, was universally disregarded. The people having been, from time immemorial, accustomed to this state of confusion, had no idea that it was possible to enjoy a more rational form of government. This prejudice was of so long a standing, so generally adopted, and so firmly established, that Maximilian, Philip and Charles, the three Austrian princes who first inherited the dominions of the house of Burgundy, thought it prudent not to attempt any innovation. They flattered themselves, that some happier conjuncture might enable their successors to execute with safety, a plan, which they could not even attempt without danger.

AT this time a great change was preparing in the minds of men in Europe. The revival of letters, the extension of commerce, the invention of printing, and the discovery of the compass, brought on the æra when human reason was to shake off the yoke of some of those prejudices which had gained ground in the barbarous ages.

Rise of the
republic of
Holland.

THE intelligent part of the world were for the most part cured of the Romish superstitions. They were disgusted at the abuse the popes made of their authority; the contributions they raised upon the people; the sale of indulgences; and more particularly at those absurd refinements with which they had disguised the plain religion of Jesus Christ.

BUT these discerning people were not the first who attempted a revolution. This honour was reserved for
a turbulent

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a turbulent monk, whose barbarous eloquence roused the northern nations. The most enlightened men of the age contributed to undeceive the rest. Some of the European princes embraced the reformed religion; others held communion with the church of Rome. The former found no difficulty in bringing over their subjects to their opinions; while the latter had much difficulty to prevent theirs from embracing the new doctrines. They had recourse to a variety of measures, which were too often pursued with rigour. That spirit of fanaticism, which had destroyed the Saxons, the Albigenes, and the Hussites was revived. Gibbets were erected and fires kindled anew, to check the progress of the new doctrine.

No sovereign was so ready to make use of these expedients as Philip II. His tyranny was felt in every part of his extensive monarchy; and his zeal for his religion prompted him to persecute all those who fell under the denomination of heretics or infidels. Designs were formed to deprive the inhabitants of the low countries of their privileges; and millions of citizens were condemned to the scaffold. The people revolted: and the same scene was renewed which the Venetians had shewn the world many centuries before, when flying from oppression, and finding no retreat upon land, they sought an asylum upon the waters. Seven small provinces lying on the northern side of Brabant and Flanders, which were rather overflowed than watered by large rivers, and often covered by the sea, whose violence was with difficulty restrained by dikes; having no wealth but what accrued from a few pasture lands, and a little fishing; formed one of the richest and most powerful republics in the world; and which may, perhaps, be considered as the model of commercial states. The first efforts of this united people had not the desired success; but though they

they were frequently defeated, they ended with victories. The Spanish troops they had to encounter, were the best in Europe, and at first gained several advantages. But by degrees the new republicans recovered their losses. They resisted with firmness; and gaining experience from their own miscarriages, as well as from the example of their enemies, they at length became their superiors in the art of war: and the necessity they lay under of disputing every inch of ground in so confined a country as Holland, gave them opportunities of improving the art of fortifying a country or a town in the best manner.

THE weak state of Holland, at its first rise, obliged it to seek for arms and assistance from every quarter where there was any prospect of obtaining them. It granted an asylum to pirates of all nations, with a view of employing them against the Spaniards; and this was the foundation of their naval strength. Wise laws, an admirable order, a constitution which preserved equality among mankind, an excellent police and a spirit of toleration, soon erected this republic into a powerful state. In the year 1590, the Hollanders more than once humbled the pride of the Spanish flag. They had already established a kind of trade, the most suitable that could be to their situation. Their vessels were employed, as they are still in carrying the merchandise of one nation to another. The Hanse Towns, and some towns in Italy, were in possession of these transports: and the Hollanders, in competition with them, by their frugality soon gained the advantage. Their ships of war protected their merchantmen. Their merchants grew ambitious of extending their commerce, and got the trade of Lisbon into their hands, where they purchased Indian goods, which they sold again to all the states of Europe.

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The first
voyages of
the Hollan-
ders to In-
dia.

PHILIP II. having made himself master of Portuga, enjoined his new subjects in 1594, to hold no correspondence with his enemies. This arbitrary prince did not foresee that this prohibition, which he thought must weaken the Hollanders, would in fact render them more formidable. Had not these discerning navigators been excluded from a port, upon which the whole success of their naval enterprises depended, there is reason to believe that they would have contented themselves with the large commerce they carried on in the European seas, without thinking of failing to remoter climates. But as it was impossible to preserve their trade without the productions of the east, they were forced to go beyond a sphere which was, perhaps, too confined for a situation like theirs; and resolved to seek their riches at the fountain head.

It appeared to be the best plan to fit out ships, and send them to India: but the Hollanders wanted pilots who were acquainted with the seas, and factors who understood the commerce of Asia. They were alarmed at the danger of making long voyages, where the enemy was master of the coasts, and of having their vessels intercepted during a passage of six thousand leagues. It was judged more adviseable to attempt the discovery of a passage to China and Japan through the northern seas, which would be shorter, as well as more wholesome and secure. The English had made the attempt in vain; and the Hollanders renewed it with no better success.

WHILE they were engaged in this enterprise, Cornelius Houtman, a merchant of that nation, a man of a penetrating and daring genius, being detained at Lisbon for debt, gave the merchants at Amsterdam to understand, that if they would procure his enlargement, he would communicate to them many discoveries he had made, which might turn to their advantage.

tage. He had in fact informed himself of every particular relating to the passage to India, and the manner of carrying on trade in those parts. His proposals were accepted, and his debts discharged. The information he gave proving answerable to the expectations he had raised, those who had released him from his confinement, formed an association under the name of the Company of distant Countries, and gave him the command of four vessels to conduct them to India by the cape of Good Hope.

THE principal object of this voyage was to observe the coasts, the inhabitants and the trade of different places, avoiding, as much as possible, the Portuguese settlements. Houtman reconnoitred the coasts of Africa and Brazil; made some stay at Madagascar, touched at the Maldives, and visited the islands of Sunda; where finding the country abounding in pepper, he bought a quantity of it, together with some others of the most valuable spices. His prudence procured him an alliance with the principal sovereign of Java; but the Portuguese, notwithstanding they were hated, and had no settlement upon the island, created him some enemies. Having got the better in some skirmishes he was unavoidably engaged in, he returned with his small squadron to Holland; where, though he brought little wealth, he raised much expectation. He brought away some negroes, Chinese, and inhabitants of Malabar, a young native of Malacca, a Japanese, and Abdul, a pilot of the Guzarat, a man of great abilities, and perfectly well acquainted with the coast of India.

THE account given by Houtman, and the discoveries made in the course of the voyage, encouraged the merchants of Amsterdam to form the plan of a settlement at Java, which, at the same time that it would throw the trade of pepper into their hands, place them near the islands that produce more valuable spices, and

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facilitate their communication with China and Japan, would fix them at a distance from the center of that European power, which they had the most reason to dread in India. Admiral Van Neck, who was sent upon this important expedition with eight vessels, arrived at the island of Java, where he found the inhabitants prejudiced against his nation. They fought and negotiated by turns. Abdul the pilot, the Chinese, and above all, the hatred that prevailed against the Portuguese, proved of service to the Dutch. They were permitted to trade, and, in a short time, fitted out four vessels laden with spices and some linens. The admiral with the rest of his fleet sailed to the Moluccas, where he learnt that the natives of the country had forced the Portuguese to abandon some places, and that they only waited for a favourable opportunity of expelling them from the rest. He established factories in several of these islands, entered into treaty with some of the sovereigns, and returned to Europe laden with riches.

It is impossible to describe the joy that prevailed at his return. The success of his voyage raised a fresh emulation. Societies were formed in most of the maritime and trading towns in the low countries. These associations soon became so numerous, that they injured each other; as the rage of purchasing raised the value of commodities to an exorbitant degree in India, and the necessity of selling them made them bear a low price in Europe. They were on the point of being ruined by their own efforts, and by the want of power in each of them to resist a formidable enemy, fully bent upon their destruction, when the government, which is sometimes wiser than individuals, opportunely stepped in to their assistance.

Establishment of the India company.

IN 1602 the states general united these different societies into one body, to which they gave the name of the

the East India Company. It was invested with authority to make peace or war with the eastern princes, to erect forts, chuse their own governors, maintain garisons, and to nominate officers for the conduct of the police, and the administration of justice.

THIS company, which had no parallel in antiquity, and was the pattern of all succeeding societies of the same kind, set out with great advantages. The private associations which had been previously formed, proved of service to it by their misfortunes, and even by their mistakes. The great number of vessels which they fitted out had contributed to make all the branches of trade perfectly understood; to form many officers and seamen; and to encourage citizens of repute to undertake these foreign expeditions; persons only of no estimation or fortune having been exposed in the first voyages.

So many united assistances could not fail of being improved to advantage, when prosecuted with vigour; and, accordingly, the new company soon acquired a considerable degree of power. It was a new state erected within the state itself, which enriched it, and increased its strength abroad; but might, in time, weaken the influence of the democratical principle, which inspires the love of equality and oeconomy, of the laws, and of one's own countrymen.

Soon after its establishment, the company fitted out for India fourteen ships and some yachts, under the command of Admiral Warwick, whom the Hollanders look upon as the founder of their commerce, and of their powerful colonies in the east. He built a factory in the island of Java, and secured it by fortifications; he likewise built another in the territories of the king of Johor; and formed alliances with several princes in Bengal. He had frequent engagements with the Portuguese, in which he had almost always the advantage.

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Wars of the
Hollanders
and Portu-
guese.

In those parts where the Portuguese had appeared in the character of merchants only, he found it necessary to remove the prejudices they had raised against his countrymen, whom they had represented as a set of banditti, avowed enemies to all regal authority, and addicted to all manner of vice. The behaviour of the Hollanders and the Portuguese speedily convinced the people of Asia which of these nations had the advantage in point of manners. A bloody war soon ensued between these two powers.

THE Portuguese had on their side the advantage of a thorough knowledge of these seas; they were accustomed to the climate, and had the assistance of several nations, which, though they hated them, were compelled through fear to fight for their oppressors. The Hollanders were animated by the critical situation of their affairs; by the hopes of procuring an absolute and lasting independency, which at present they could not boast of; by the ambition of establishing a vast commerce upon the ruins of that of their old masters; and by the hatred which a difference in religious opinions had rendered implacable. These passions, at the same time that they inspired all the activity, strength, and perseverance necessary for the execution of great designs, did not hinder them from taking their measures with precaution. Their humanity and honesty attached the people to their cause; and many of them soon declared against their ancient oppressors.

THE Hollanders were continually sending over fresh colonists, ships, and troops, while the Portuguese were left without any forces but their own. Spain did not send them any fleets of merchantmen, or grant them the protection of the squadron which had hitherto been kept in India; she neither repaired their places of strength, or renewed their garrisons:

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It should seem that she wanted to humble her new subjects, whom she thought not so submissive as might be wished, and to perpetuate her authority by exposing them to repeated losses. She proceeded still further; and to prevent Portugal from having any resources in itself, she seized upon its inhabitants, and sent them to Italy, Flanders, and other countries where she was at war.

NOTWITHSTANDING this, the scale continued even for a long time, and the success was various on both sides. Nor is this in the least surprizing. The Portuguese, on their arrival in India, had nothing to encounter at sea but a few weak vessels, ill built, ill armed, and ill defended; nothing by land but effeminate men, voluptuous princes, and dastardly slaves: whereas those who came to wrest the sceptre of Asia out of their hands, had vessels to board of the same construction as their own; regular fortresses to assault, and Europeans to conquer and subdue, who were grown haughty by a long series of victories, and by being the founders of an immense empire.

THE time was now come, when the Portuguese were to expiate their perfidy, their robberies, and their cruelties: and the prediction of one of the kings of Persia was fulfilled, who asking an ambassador just arrived at Goa, how many governors his master had beheaded since the establishment of his power in India; received for answer, *None at all. So much the worse,* replied the monarch; *his authority cannot be of long duration in a country where so many acts of outrage and barbarity are committed.*

It does not, however, appear, in the course of this war, that the Hollanders possessed that daring rashness, that unshaken intrepidity, which had marked the enterprizes of the Portuguese; but there was a consistency and unremitting perseverance observable in

in all their designs. Often repulsed, but never discouraged, they renewed their attack with fresh vigour, and on a better plan. They never exposed themselves to the danger of a total defeat. If, in any engagement, their ships had suffered, they sheered off: and as they never lost sight of their commercial interest, the vanquished fleet, while it was repairing on the coasts belonging to some of the Indian princes, purchased merchandise, and returned to Holland. By this method the company acquired a new fund, which enabled them to undertake fresh enterprizes. If the Hollanders did not always perform great actions, they never attempted useless ones. They had neither the pride nor the vain glory of the Portuguese, who had frequently engaged in war rather perhaps through the love of fame than of power. The Hollanders steadily pursued their first plan, without suffering themselves to be diverted from it either by motives of revenge, or projects of conquest.

In the year 1607, they endeavoured to open a communication with the ports belonging to the vast empire of China, which, at that time, was cautious of admitting strangers. The Portuguese found means, by bribery, and the intrigues of their missionaries, to get the Hollanders excluded. They resolved to extort by force what they could not obtain by treaty, and determined to intercept the vessels belonging to the Chinese. This piratical proceeding did not answer their expectations. A Portuguese fleet sailed from Macao to attack the pirates who thought proper to retire. The inequality of their numbers, the impossibility of refitting in seas where they had no shelter, and the fear of disgracing their nation in the eyes of a great empire, whose good opinion it was their interest to preserve; all these considerations determined them to decline the fight; but this was only for a short time.

SOME

SOME years after the Hollanders laid siege to a place, the importance of which they had become acquainted with. The enterprize did not succeed; but as they never lost any advantage that could be gained by their armaments, they sent that which they had employed against Macao to form a colony in the Piscadore-isles. These are rocks where no water is to be had in dry seasons, and no provisions at any time. These inconveniencies were not counterbalanced by any solid advantages, because the people of the neighbouring continent were forbidden, on the severest penalties, to hold any correspondence with strangers who might become dangerous so near the coasts. The Hollanders had determined to abandon a settlement which they despaired of making useful, when, in the year 1624, they were invited to fix at Formosa, and had assurances given them that the Chinese merchants would be allowed full liberty to go there and trade with them.

THIS island, though it lies opposite to the province of Fokien, at the distance of only thirty leagues from the coast, was not subject to the dominion of the Chinese, whose genius does not incline them to conquest, and who, through an inhuman and ill-judged policy, would rather suffer a decrease of population, than transplant their supernumerary subjects to the neighbouring countries. Formosa was found to be a hundred and thirty or forty leagues in circumference. Its inhabitants, if we may judge from their manners and their appearance, seemed to be descended from the Tartars in the most northern part of Asia: and probably found their way through the country of Corea. They lived chiefly by fishing and hunting, and scarce wore any covering.

THE Hollanders, having without difficulty informed themselves of every particular that prudence suggested,

The Hollanders form a settlement at Formosa.

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ed, thought it most adviseable to fix their settlement on a small island that lay contiguous to the larger one. This situation afforded them three considerable advantages; they could easily defend themselves if hatred or jealousy should incline their neighbours to give them any disturbance; the two islands afforded them a harbour, and they might carry on a safe communication with China during the monsoons, which they could not have done in any other position they could have chosen.

THE new colony insensibly gained strength without attracting any notice, till it rose at once to a degree of consequence that astonished all Asia. This unexpected prosperity was owing to the conquest of China by the Tartars. Thus it is that torrents enrich the vallies with the stores they carry down from the desolated mountains. Above a hundred thousand Chinese, who resolved not to submit to the conqueror, fled for refuge to Formosa. They carried with them that activity which is peculiar to their character, the manner of cultivating rice and sugar, and were the means of drawing thither from their own nation an infinite number of vessels. In a short time the island became the centre of all the correspondence that was carried on between Java, Siam, the Philippine islands, China, Japan, and the rest of those countries; and in a few years was considered as the first mart in India. The Hollanders flattered themselves with the prospect of still greater advantages; but fortune deceived their expectations.

A CHINESE, called Equam, of obscure birth, whose turbulent disposition had made him turn pirate, had attained, by the greatness of his talents, to the rank of high admiral. He defended his country against the Tartars for a considerable time, but seeing his master obliged to submit, he endeavoured to make terms
for

for himself with the conquerors. He was decoyed to Pekin, where he was seized, and condemned by the usurper to perpetual imprisonment, in which he is supposed to have died of poison. Coxinga saved himself on board his father's fleet, vowed eternal enmity to the oppressors of his family and country, and concluded that he should be able to take the severest revenge upon them, if he made himself master of Formosa. He made a descent upon it, and the minister Hambroeck was taken prisoner in the attack.

HAMBROECK, being appointed with some other prisoners to be sent to the fort of Zealand to prevail with his countrymen to capitulate, called to mind the example of Regulus; he exhorted them to be firm, and used every argument to persuade them, that if they strenuously preserved, they would oblige the enemy to retire. The garrison being aware that this generous man would, on his return to the camp, fall a sacrifice to his magnanimity, used their utmost efforts to detain him. Their remonstrances were seconded by the tenderest solicitations of two of his daughters, who were in the citadel. His answer was, *I have pledged my honour to return to my confinement: I hold myself obliged to perform my promise. My memory shall never be sullied with the reproach, that out of regard to my own safety I was the cause of severer treatment, or perhaps of death, to the companions of my misfortune.* After this heroic speech he calmly returned to the Chinese camp, and the siege began.

NOTWITHSTANDING the fortifications were in a bad condition, and the fort ill stored with ammunition and provisions; notwithstanding the garrison was weak, and the succours sent to attack the enemy had retreated with disgrace, Coyet the governor made an obstinate defence. In the beginning of the year 1662, being forced to capitulate, he repaired to Batavia,

via, where his superiors had recourse to those iniquitous state-intrigues which are frequently practised in all governments. They cast reflections upon his conduct, to prevent any suspicion that the loss of so important a settlement was owing to their own folly, or negligence. The attempts made to recover it, proved unsuccessful; and the Hollanders were at last reduced to the necessity of carrying on a trade with Canton on the same conditions, and under the same restrictions as other nations.

It may appear somewhat singular, that since the year 1683, when Formosa fell under the dominion of China, no Europeans have ever attempted to form any settlement there, upon the same conditions at least, as that of the Portuguese at Macão. But besides that the suspicious temper of the nation to whom that island belongs, gives no room to expect such an indulgence from them, one may venture to pronounce that such an enterprise would be a bad one. Formosa was a place of importance only so long as the Japanese had a communication with it, and its produce was allowed a free importation into Japan.

THE Hollanders seemed to be for ever excluded from this empire. After some unsuccessful attempts, they began to despair of getting any footing there; when one of their captains, who was thrown upon the coasts of Japan by a storm in 1609, informed them that the people were favourably disposed towards them.

Trade of the
Hollanders
to Japan.

ABOUT a century before this, the government of Japan had been changed. A magnanimous people had been made furious by a tyrant. Taycosama, who from a soldier became a general, and from a general an emperor, had usurped the whole power, and abolished all the rights of the people. Having stripped the Dairo of the little remains of his authority, he had

had reduced all the petty princes of the country under his subjection. Tyranny is arrived at its height when it establishes despotism by law. Taycosama went still further, and confirmed it by sanguinary laws. His civil legislation was actually a code of criminal prosecutions, exhibiting nothing but scaffolds, punishments, criminals, and executioners.

THE Japanese, alarmed at this prospect of slavery, had recourse to arms. Torrents of blood were shed throughout the empire: and though liberty might be supposed to be superior in courage to tyranny, the latter triumphed over it. Tyranny became still more ferocious, when animated by the spirit of revenge. An inquisition, public as well as private, dismayed the citizens; they became spies, informers, accusers, and enemies to each other. An error in the administration of the police was construed into a crime against the state; and an unguarded expression was made high-treason. Prosecution assumed the character of legislation. Three successive generations were doomed to welter in their own blood; and rebel parents gave birth to a proscribed posterity.

DURING a whole century, Japan resembled a dungeon filled with criminals, or a place of execution. The throne, which was raised upon the ruins of the altar, was surrounded with gibbets. The subjects were become as cruel as their tyrant. They sought, with a strange avidity, to procure death, by committing crimes which were readily suggested under a despot government. For want of executioners, they punished themselves for the loss of liberty, or revenged themselves of tyranny, by putting an end to their own existence. To enable them to face death, and to assist them in suffering it, they derived new courage from christianity, which the Portuguese had introduced amongst them.

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THE oppressions the Japanese laboured under afforded an opportunity for the professors of this new worship to make numerous proselytes. The missionaries who preached a suffering religion, were listened to with attention. In vain did the doctrine of Confucius try to gain reception among a people who bordered upon China. Some erroneous tenets of christianity, which bore a considerable affinity to those of the Budzoists, and the penances equally enjoined by the two systems, procured the Portuguese missionaries several proselytes. But setting aside this resemblance, the Japanese would have chosen to embrace christianity merely from a motive of hatred to the prince.

If the new religion was discountenanced at court, it could not fail to meet with a favourable reception in the families of the dethroned princes. It added fresh fuel to their resentment: they were fond of a strange God whom the tyrant did not love. Taycosama ruled with a rod of iron, and persecuted the christians as enemies to the state. He proscribed the doctrines imported from Europe, and this proscription made them strike the deeper root. Piles were kindled, and millions of victims threw themselves into the flames. The emperors of Japan transcended those of Rome in the art of persecuting the christians. During the space of forty years the scaffolds were stained with the innocent blood of Martyrs. This proved the seed of christianity, and of sedition also. Near forty thousand christians in the kingdom or province of Darima took up arms in the name, and for the name of Christ; and defended themselves with such fury, that not a single person survived the slaughter occasioned by persecution.

THE navigation, trade, and factories of the Portuguese were preserved during this great crisis. The court

court and people had, however, for a long time, been jealous of them; they had incurred the suspicion of government by their ambition, their intrigues, and perhaps by their secret conspiracies; and had rendered themselves odious to the people by their avarice, their pride, and their treachery. But as the merchandise they brought was grown into fashion, and could not be procured by any other channel, they were not excluded from Japan till the end of the year 1638, when other merchants were in a situation to supply their place.

THE Hollanders, who had, for some time entered into competition with them, were not involved in the disgrace. As these republicans had never shewn themselves ambitious of interfering with the government; as they had suffered their artillery to be employed against the christians; as they were at war with the proscribed nations; as their strength was not thoroughly known, and they appeared to be reserved, pliant, modest, and entirely devoted to commerce; they were tolerated, though at the same time they were subjected to great restraints. Three years after, whether it was that the spirit of intrigue and domination seized, or, which is more probable, that no conduct whatever could prevent the Japanese from harbouring suspicions, they were deprived of the liberty and the privileges they enjoyed.

EVER since the year 1641, they have been confined to the artificial island of Disnia, raised in the harbour of Nangasacke, and which has a communication with the city bridge. As soon as they arrive, their ships are stripped, and their powder, muskets, swords, guns, and even rudder, carried ashore. In this kind of imprisonment they are treated with a degree of contempt which is beyond conception; and can transact no business but with commissaries appointed to regulate

gulate the price and the quantity of their merchandise. It is impossible that the tameness with which they have endured this treatment for more than a century, should not have lessened them in the eyes of the nation who is witness of it; and that the love of gain should have produced such an extreme insensibility to insults, without tarnishing their character.

THE chief commodities which the Dutch carry to Japan are European cloths, silks, spices, printed linens, sugar, and wood for dying. These articles were formerly of considerable importance. In the very year of the company's disgrace, its returns amounted to sixteen millions (700,000*l.*): but the shackles, which from time to time have been imposed upon it, have gradually reduced their once flourishing trade to nothing. The cargo of the two vessels they send annually, cannot be sold for more than a million (43,750*l.*) They receive in payment eleven thousand chests of copper, at forty-one livres four sols (1*l.* 16*s.* 0*d.* $\frac{1}{2}$) per chest, which weighs one hundred and twenty pounds. Their expences, including presents and the charge of the embassy they send every year to the emperor, generally amount to two hundred and eighty thousand livres (12,250*l.*) and their profits do not exceed three hundred and ten thousand (about 131,687*l.*); so that if the company gains forty thousand livres (1,750*l.*) it is reckoned a good year.

THE trade of the Chinese, who, except the Hollanders, are the only foreigners admitted into the empire, is not more extensive than theirs, and subjected to the same restrictions. Ever since the year 1688 they are confined during the continuance of the sale of their goods, without the walls of Nangasacke, in a kind of prison, which is divided into several huts, surrounded with a palisade, and defended by a good ditch, and a guard placed at all the gates. These precautions

precautions have been taken in consequence of a discovery that some works, in favour of christianity, had been sold together with some books of philosophy and morality. The European missionaries had ordered some people of Canton to circulate them, and the desire of gain betrayed them into a piece of chicanery, which has cost them very dear.

It is natural to suppose, that those who have changed the ancient government of the country into the most arbitrary tyranny upon earth, would look upon all intercourse with strangers as dangerous to their authority. There is the more reason for this conjecture, as the inhabitants are all forbidden, on pain of death, to go out of their country. This rigorous edict is become the fundamental maxim of the empire.

Thus the inhuman policy of the state has deprived it of the only means of acquiring a milder temper, by softening the national character. The Japanese, fiery as his climate, and restless as the ocean that surrounds him, required that the utmost scope should be given to his activity, which could only be done by encouraging a brisk trade. To prevent the necessity of restraining him by punishments, it was necessary to keep him in exercise by constant labour; and to allow his vivacity an uninterrupted career abroad, when it was in danger of kindling the flame of sedition at home. That energy of mind which has degenerated into fanaticism, would have been improved into industry; contemplation would have changed into action; and the fear of punishment into the love of pleasure. That hatred of life, which torments the Japanese, while he is enslaved, oppressed and kept in continual fears by the rigour of the laws, against which he is perpetually struggling, would have given way to the spirit of curiosity, that would have induced

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duced him to traverse the ocean, and visit foreign nations. By a frequent change of place and climate, he would insensibly have changed his manners, opinions, and character; and this change would have been as happy for him as it is for the generality of people. What he might chance to lose by this intercourse as a citizen, he would gain as a man; but the Japanese are become tygers, through the cruelty of their tyrants.

WHATEVER may be said in praise of the Spartans, the Egyptians, and other distinct nations, who have owed their superior strength, grandeur, and permanency to the state of separation in which they kept themselves; mankind has received no benefit from these singular institutions. On the contrary, the spirit of intercourse is useful to all nations, as it promotes a mutual communication of their productions and knowledge. In a word, if it were useless or pernicious to some particular people, it was necessary for the Japanese. By commerce they would have become enlightened in China, civilized in India, and cured of all their prejudices among the Europeans.

The Moluccas submit to the Dutch.

THE Dutch had the good fortune to meet with resources which indemnified them for the loss they had sustained at Japan. They had not yet entered into commerce with these, the most remarkable islands in the torrid zone, when they attempted to secure to themselves the trade of the Moluccas. The Portuguese, who had long been in possession of them, were obliged to share their advantages with their masters the Spaniards; and, at length, to give up the trade almost entirely to them. The two nations, divided in their interests, and perpetually at war with each other, because the government had neither leisure nor skill to remove their mutual antipathy, joined to oppose the subjects of the United Provinces. The latter,

ter, assisted by the natives of the country, who had not yet learned to fear or hate them, by degrees gained the superiority. The ancient conquerors were driven out about the year 1627; and their place was supplied by others equally avaricious, though less turbulent, and more enlightened.

As soon as the Dutch had established themselves firmly at the Moluccas, they endeavoured to get the exclusive trade of spices into their own hand: an advantage, which the nation they had just expelled was never able to procure. They skilfully availed themselves both of the forts they had taken sword in hand, and those they had imprudently been suffered to erect, to draw the kings of Ternate and Tidore, who were masters of this Archipelago, into their scheme. These princes found themselves obliged to consent, that the clove and nutmeg trees should be rooted up in the islands that were still under their dominion. The first of these sceptered slaves, in consideration of this great sacrifice, received a pension of 64,500 livres (about 2,821*l.*); and the other, one of about 12,000 (525*l.*) A garrison of seven hundred men was appointed to secure the performance of this treaty: and to so low an ebb is the power of these kings reduced by war, tyranny, and misfortunes, that these forces would be more than sufficient to keep them in this state of dependence, if it were not necessary to have an eye upon the Philippine islands, whose vicinity constantly occasions some alarm. Notwithstanding the inhabitants are prohibited from carrying on any navigation, and that no foreign nation is admitted among them, the Dutch trade there is in a languishing state; as they have no means of exchange, nor any silver but what they carry over to pay their troops, their commissioners and pensions. This government, deducting the small profits, costs the company 140,000 livres (6,125*l.*) a year.

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THIS loss is fully compensated at Amboyna, where they have engrossed the cultivation of cloves. The tree that produces them is, as to its bark, very much like the olive-tree, and resembles the laurel in its height, and the shape of its leaves. It produces at the extremity of its numerous branches, a prodigious quantity of flowers, which are white at first, then green, and at last grow red and pretty hard. When they arrive at this degree of maturity, they are, properly speaking, cloves. As it dries, the clove assumes a dark yellowish cast; when gathered, it becomes of a deep brown. No verdure is ever seen under this plant, which is doubtless owing to its exhausting all the nutritious juices of the soil that produces it.

THE season for gathering the cloves is from October to February. The boughs of the tree are strongly shaken, or the cloves beat down with long reeds. Large cloths are spread to receive them, and they are afterwards either dried in the sun, or in the smoke of the bamboo cane.

THE cloves which escape the notice of those who gather them, or are purposely left upon the tree, continue to grow till they are about an inch in thickness; and these falling off, produce new plants, which do not bear in less than eight or nine years. These cloves which they call mother-cloves, though inferior to the common sort, are not without their value. The Dutch preserve them in sugar, and, in long voyages, eat them after meals to promote digestion; or make use of them as an agreeable remedy for the scurvy.

THE clove, to be in perfection, must be full sized, heavy, oily, and easily broken; of a fine smell, and a hot aromatic taste, so as almost to burn the throat; it should make the fingers smart when handled, and

leave

leave an oily moisture upon them when pressed. The principal use of it is for culinary purposes. In some parts of Europe, and in India in particular, it is so much admired as to be thought an indispensable ingredient in almost every dish. It is put into their food, liquors, wines and enters likewise into the composition of perfumes. It is little used in medicine; but there is an oil extracted from it which is in considerable repute.

THE company have allotted the inhabitants of Amboyna four thousand parcels of land, on each of which they were at first allowed, and about the year 1720 compelled, to plant a hundred and twenty-five trees, amounting in the whole to five hundred thousand. Each of these parcels produces annually, on an average, upwards of two pounds of cloves: and consequently the collective produce must weigh more than a million.

THE cultivator is paid with the specie that is constantly returned to the company, and receives some blue and unbleached cottons which are brought from Coromandel. This small trade might, in some measure, be increased, if the inhabitants of Amboyna, and the small islands that depend upon it, would have attended to the culture of pepper and indigo, which has been tried with success. Miserable as these islanders are, since they are not tempted by an adequate reward for their labours, they remain in a state of indolence.

THE administration is somewhat different in the islands of Banda, which are thirty leagues distant from Amboyna. There are five of these islands, two of which are uncultivated and almost uninhabited; and the other three claim the distinction of being the only islands in the world that produce the nutmeg.

THE nutmeg grows to the same height as the pear-tree. It has a pithy wood, an ash-coloured bark, and flexible branches. The leaves are produced in pairs upon one single stem, and when bruised, emit an agreeable odour. The fruit succeeds the flowers, which resemble those of the cherry-tree. It is of the size of an egg, and of the colour of an apricot. The outer rind is very thick, and resembles that of our nuts as they hang upon the tree, opening in the same manner when ripe, and discovering the nutmeg covered with its mace. It is then time to gather it, to prevent the mace or flower of the nutmeg from growing dry, and the nutmeg from losing that oil which preserves it, and in which its excellence consists. Those that are gathered before they are perfectly ripe are preserved in vinegar or sugar, and are admired only in Asia.

It is nine months before this fruit comes to perfection. After it is gathered, the outer rind is stripped off, and the mace separated from it, and laid in the sun to dry. The nuts require more preparation. They are spread upon hurdles, or dried for six weeks by a slow fire, in sheds erected for that purpose. They are then separated from the shell, and thrown into lime water, which is a necessary precaution to preserve them from worms.

THE nutmeg differs in goodness according to the age of the tree, the soil, the exposition, and method of culture. It is most esteemed when it is fresh, moist, and heavy, and when it yields an oily juice upon being pricked. It helps digestion, expels wind, and strengthens the bowels.

If we except this valuable spice, the islands of Banda, like all the Moluccas, are barren to a dreadful degree. What they produce in superfluities they want in necessities. The land will not bring forth any kind of corn: and the pith of the sago serves the natives of the country instead of bread.

As this food is not sufficient for the Europeans who settle in the Moluccas, they are allowed to fetch provisions from Java, Macassar, or the extremely fertile island of Bali. The company itself carries some merchandise to Banda.

THIS is the only settlement in the East Indies that can be considered as an European colony; because it is the only one where the Europeans are proprietors of lands. The company finding that the inhabitants of Banda were savage, cruel, and treacherous, because they were impatient under their yoke, resolved to exterminate them. Their possessions were divided among the white people, who got slaves from some of the neighbouring islands to cultivate the lands. These white people are for the most part Creoles or malecontents, who have quitted the service of the company. In the small isle of Rosising, there are likewise several banditti, whom the laws have branded with disgrace, and young men of abandoned principles, whose families wanted to get rid of them: so that Banda is called the *island of correction*. The climate is so unhealthy, that these unhappy men live but a short time. It is on account of the loss of so great a number of hands, that attempts have been made to transfer the culture of the nutmeg to Amboyna; and the company were likewise probably influenced by two other strong motives of interest, as their trade could be carried on with less expence and greater safety. But the experiments that have been made have proved unsuccessful, and matters remain in their former state.

To secure to themselves an exclusive title to the produce of the Moluccas, which are, with good reason, stiled the *gold mines* of the company, the Dutch have been under a necessity of forming two settlements, one at Timor, and the other at Celebes.

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The Dutch
form a set-
tlement at
Timor.

THE first of these islands is sixty leagues long, and fifteen or eighteen broad. It is divided into several sovereignties; in which there are numbers of Portuguese. These conquerors, who at their first arrival in India had advanced with the utmost intrepidity and most amazing celerity, and had pursued a long and dangerous career with a rapidity which nothing could stop; who were so well accustomed to acts of heroism, that they performed the most arduous enterprises with ease; these conquerors, I say, when they were attacked by the Dutch, when their whole empire, grown too large and tottering under its own weight, was ready to fall, displayed none of those virtues, which had laid the foundation of their power. When they were dispossessed of a fort, driven out of a kingdom, dispersed in consequence of a defeat, they should have sought an asylum among their brethren, and should have rallied under standards that had hitherto been invincible; either to put a stop to the progress of the enemy, or to recover their settlements: but so far were they from forming a resolution so generous, that they solicited some employment, or some pension, from those very Indian princes they had so often insulted. Those who had contracted a habit of effeminacy, and idleness above the rest, retreated to Timor, which, being a poor island, where no works of industry were carried on, would screen them they thought from the pursuit of an enemy intent upon useful conquests. They were, however, deceived. In the year 1613 they were driven from the town of Kupan by the Dutch, who found a fort there, which they have ever since garrisoned with fifty men. The company sends some coarse linens thither every year, and receives in return wax, tortoise-shell, sanders wood, and cadiang, a small species of bean, commonly used by the Dutch on ship-board, by way of variety

ety of food for the crew. All these objects employ one or two sloops, which are dispatched from Batavia: nothing is either gained or lost by this settlement; the profits just answer the expences. The Dutch would have abandoned Timor long ago, if they had not been apprehensive that some active nation might fix there and avail themselves of the opportunities that situation would give them to disturb the trade of the Moluccas. It was the same cautious principle which drew them to Celebes.

THIS island, which is about a hundred and thirty leagues in diameter, is very habitable, though it lies in the center of the torrid zone. The heats are allayed by the copious rains, and cooling breezes. The inhabitants are the bravest people in the south of Asia; they make a furious onset, but, after a contest of two hours, a total want of courage takes place of this strange impetuosity: the intoxicating fumes of opium, which are doubtless the cause of this terrible ferment, go off, when their strength is exhausted by transports that approach to madness. The *crid*, which is their favourite weapon, is a foot and a half long; it is shaped like a poinard, and the blade is serpentine. They never carry more than one to battle; but in private quarrels two are necessary: they parry with that in the left hand, and attack the adversary with the other. The wounds made by this weapon are very dangerous, and the duel most commonly ends in the death of both the combatants.

The Dutch make themselves masters of Celebes.

THE inhabitants of Celebes are rendered active, industrious, and robust, by a rigid education. Every hour in the day their nurses rub them with oil, or water just warm. These repeated unctions encourage nature to exert herself freely. They are weaned at a year old, an idea prevailing, that if they continued to suck any longer, it would hurt their understandings.

When

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When they are five or six years old, the male children of any distinction are intrusted to the care of some relation or friend, that their courage may not be weakened by the caresses of their mothers, and a habit of reciprocal tenderness. They do not return to their families till they arrive at the age of fifteen or sixteen, when the law allows them to marry: a liberty they seldom make use of, before they are thoroughly versed in the exercise of arms.

FORMERLY these people acknowledged no other gods but the sun and the moon. They sacrificed to them in the public squares, having no materials which they thought valuable enough to be employed in raising temples. According to the creed of these islanders, the sun and moon were eternal as well as the heavens, whose empire they divided between them. Ambition set them at variance. The moon, flying from the sun, miscarried, and was delivered of the earth; she was big with several other worlds which she will successively bring forth, but without violence, in order to repair the loss of those whom the fire of her conqueror will consume.

THESE absurdities were universally received at Celebes; but they had not so lasting an influence over either the nobles or the people as is found in the religious doctrines of other nations. About two centuries ago, some Christians and Mohammedans having brought their opinions hither, the principal king of the country took a total dislike to the national worship. Alarmed at the terrible catastrophe, with which he was equally threatened by both the new systems of religion, he convened a general assembly. On the day appointed he ascended an eminence; where spreading out his hands towards heaven, and, in a standing posture, he addressed the following prayer to the Supreme Being.

“ GREAT

" GREAT God, I do not, at this time, fall down
 " before thee, because I do not implore thy clemen-
 " cy. I have nothing to ask of thee which thou
 " oughtest not in justice to grant. Two foreign na-
 " tions whose mode of worship is widely different,
 " are come to strike terror into me, and my subjects.
 " They assure me that thou wilt punish me eternally
 " if I do not obey thy laws : I have therefore a right
 " to require that thou wouldest make them known
 " to me. I do not ask thee to reveal the impenetra-
 " ble mysteries which surroundest thy essence, and
 " which to me are useless. I am come hither to in-
 " quire, together with my people, what those duties
 " are which thou intendest to prescribe to us. Speak,
 " O my God ; since thou art the Author of nature,
 " thou canst discern the bottom of our hearts, and
 " knowest that it is impossible they should entertain
 " any thoughts of disobedience. But if thou conde-
 " scendest not to make thyself understood by mor-
 " tals ; if it is unworthy of thine essence to employ
 " the language of man to dictate the duties required
 " of man ; I call my whole nation, the sun which
 " enlightens me, the earth that supports me, the wa-
 " ters that encompass my dominions, and thyself to
 " witness, that in the sincerity of my heart I seek to
 " know thy will : and I declare to thee this day, that
 " I shall acknowledge, as the depositaries of the ora-
 " cles, the ministers of either religion whom thou
 " shalt cause to arrive the first in our harbours. The
 " winds and the waves are the ministers of thy pow-
 " er ; let them be the signals of thy will. If, with these
 " honest intentions, I embrace an error, my consci-
 " ence will be at ease ; and the blame will lie upon
 " thee."

THE assembly broke up, determined to wait the
 orders of heaven, and to follow the first missionaries
 that should arrive at Celebes. The apostles of the
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coran were the most active, and the sovereign and his people were circumcised: the other parts of the island soon followed their example.

THIS unfortunate circumstance did not hinder the Portuguese from gaining a footing at Celebes. They maintained their ground there, even after they were driven out of the Moluccas. The motive which induced them to stay, and which attracted the English to this place, was, the facility of procuring spices, which the natives of the country found means to get, notwithstanding the precautions that were taken to keep them at a distance from the places where they grew.

THE Dutch, who by this competition were prevented from monopolizing the articles of cloves and nutmegs, attempted in 1660, to put a stop to this trade, which they called contraband. To favour this design, they had recourse to means repugnant to all principles of morality, but which an insatiable avarice had familiarized in Asia. By persevering in these infamous proceedings, they succeeded so far as to drive out the Portuguese, keep off the English, and to take possession of the harbour and fort of Macassar. From that time they were absolute masters of the island without having conquered it. The princes among whom it was divided, reunited in a kind of confederacy. They hold assemblies, from time to time, on affairs that concern the general interest. The result of their determinations becomes a law to each state. When any contest arises, it is decided by the governor of the Dutch colony, who presides at this diet. He observes these different sovereigns with a watchful eye, and keeps them in perfect equality with each other, to prevent any of them from aggrandizing himself to the prejudice of the company. They have disarmed them all, under pretence of hindering them from injuring each other; but in reality with a view of depriving them of the power of breaking their chains.

THE

THE Chinese, who are the only foreigners permitted to come to Celebes, carry thither tobacco, gold wire, china and unwrought silks. The Dutch sell opium, spirituous liquors, gum lac, fine coarse linens. They get but little gold from thence, but great quantities of rice, wax, slaves, and tripam, a species of mushroom, which the rounder and blacker it is, the more excellent it is esteemed. The customs bring in 80,000 livres (3,500*l.*) to the company: but it receives a much larger profit from its trade, and the tenth part of the territory which it holds in full right of sovereignty. These advantages, however, taken altogether, do not counterbalance the expences of the colony, which arise to 150,000 livres (about 6,562*l.*) more. It would certainly be given up, if it were not with good reason looked upon as the key of the spice islands.

THE settlement at Borneo was formed with a less interesting view. It is one of the largest, if not actually the largest island hitherto known. The ancient inhabitants live in the inland parts. The coasts are peopled with inhabitants from Macassar, with Javanese, Malayans, and Arabs, who, to the vices that are natural to them, have added a ferocity hardly to be met with elsewhere. The most useful production of this large country is camphire, which is a volatile, subtile oil, or resinous substance. The tree from which it is produced, grows in several of the Asiatic islands; and it has lately been discovered that this singular substance may be obtained in a greater or less quantity from all the trees that are of the laurel tribe.

To procure this camphire, the tree is cut into small pieces like matches, which are put into a vessel shaped like a bladder: they are boiled in water, and the camphire forms a glutinous mass at the top. The Dutch

The Dutch
open a communication
with Borneo.

are the only people in Europe who possess the secret of refining it in the gross.

THE camphire from Borneo is unquestionably the best of any. Its superior excellence is so well known, that the Japanese give five or six quintals of their own for one pound of that from Borneo; and the Chinese, who look upon it as the best medicine in the world, give us no less than eight hundred livres (35*l.*) a pound for it. The Pagans in all the eastern countries use common camphire in their fire-works, and the Mohammedans put it into the mouth of the dead at the time of burial.

ABOUT the year 1526 the Portuguese attempted to settle at Borneo. Too feeble to make their arms respected, they tried to gain the good-will of one of the sovereigns of the country by offering him some pieces of tapestry. This weak prince took the figures wrought in it for enchanted men, who would strangle him in the night-time, if he suffered them to come near his person. The explanations they gave to remove his apprehensions had no effect; he obstinately refused to let the present be brought into his palace, and prohibited the donors from entering his capital.

HOWEVER, these adventurers afterwards gained admission; but it proved their misfortune, for they were all massacred. A factory which the English established some years after shared the same fate. The Dutch, who had met with no better treatment, appeared again, in the year 1748, with a squadron, which, though very inconsiderable, so far imposed upon the prince, who has the pepper entirely in his hands, that he determined to grant them the privilege of trading for it exclusively: with this single reserve, that he should be allowed to deliver five hundred thousands pounds of this article to the Chinese, who had always frequented his ports. Since this treaty, the company sends rice, opium,

opium, salt, coarse linens to Bendermassen, from whence they bring some diamonds, and about six hundred thousand weight of pepper, at one and thirty livres (11. 7s. 6d. $\frac{3}{4}$) a hundred weight. The profits arising from the goods they export are scarce sufficient to answer the expences of the colony, though they amount to no more than 32,000 livres (1,400l.) Sumatra proves of greater advantage to them.

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THOUGH this island, before the arrival of the Europeans in India, was divided into several kingdoms, Achen was the centre of all trade. Its harbour was frequented by all the Asiatic states, and afterwards by the Portuguese and other nations, who raised themselves upon their ruins. Here all the productions of the east were bartered for gold, pepper, and other articles of merchandise with which this more opulent than healthy climate abounded. The disturbances which threw this famous emporium into confusion, put a stop to all industry, and drove the foreign merchants away.

Settlements
of the
Dutch at
Sumatra.

WHEN this declension happened, the Dutch formed the project of making settlements in other parts of the island, which enjoyed more tranquillity. Those that were allowed to fix in the empire of Indrapore are much reduced, since the English established themselves on the same coast. The factory of Iambay is still of less use, as the neighbouring kings have stript the prince of this district of his possessions. The company makes itself amends for these misfortunes at Palinban, where, for sixty thousand livres, (2,625l.) it maintains a fort, a garrison of eighty men, and two or three sloops, which keep continually cruising. It purchases annually two million weight of pepper, at one and twenty livres (18s. 4d. $\frac{1}{2}$) a hundred, and a million and a half of calin at fifty-seven livres ten sols (21. 10s. 3d. $\frac{3}{4}$) a hundred. This though it seems to be
a moderate

a moderate price, is of advantage to the king, who buys it from his subjects at a still lower rate. Though he takes some part of the provision and cloathing for his states from the merchants at Batavia, they are obliged to settle accounts with him in piaftres. The treasures he has amassed of the silver and of the gold found in his rivers, are known to be immense. A single European vessel might take possession of all these riches; and, with some troops for landing, maintain a post, which would be won without difficulty. It seems very extraordinary, that avarice should never have prompted any adventurer to undertake so lucrative and easy an enterprize.

CIVILIZED nations, who, to make themselves masters of the universe, have trampled upon all the rights, and stifled all the dictates of nature, will scarcely shrink at one additional act of injustice or cruelty. There is not a nation in Europe which does not think it has a just right to seize the treasures of the east. Setting aside religion, which it is no longer fashionable to plead, since its very ministers have brought it into disrepute, by their unbounded avarice and ambition, how many pretences are still remaining to justify the rage of invasion! They who live under a monarchy are desirous of extending the glory and empire of their master beyond the seas. These happy people are ready to venture their lives in the extreme parts of the globe, to increase the number of fortunate subjects, who live under the laws of the best of princes. A free nation, which is its own master, is born to command the ocean; it cannot secure the dominion of the sea, without seizing upon the land, which belongs to the first possessor; that is, to him who is able to drive out the ancient inhabitants; they are to be enslaved by force or fraud, and exterminated in order to get their possessions. Moreover, the
interests

interests of commerce, the national debt, and the majesty of the people, require it. Republicans, who have happily shaken off the yoke of foreign tyranny, must impose it on others in their turn. If they have broken their chains, it is to forge new ones. They detest monarchy, but they are in want of slaves. They have no lands of their own: why should they not seize upon those of others?

THE trade of the Dutch at Siam was at first very considerable. A tyrannic prince, who oppressed this unhappy country, having, about the year 1660, shewn a want of respect to the company, it punished him by abandoning the factories it had established in his dominions, as if it would have been a favour to have continued them. These republicans, who affected an air of grandeur, chose at that time to have their presence looked upon as a favour, a security, and an honour: and they inculcated this singular prejudice with so much success, that in order to engage them to return, a pompous embassy was sent, asking pardon for what had past, and giving the strongest assurances of a different conduct for the future.

Trade of the
Dutch at
Siam.

THERE was a time, however, when this deference was to cease, and it was hastened by the naval enterprises of other powers. The affairs of the company at Siam have always been in a declining state. Having no fort, it has never been in a condition to keep up the exclusive privilege. The king, notwithstanding the presents he requires, sells merchandise to traders of all nations, and takes goods from them on advantageous terms: with this difference only, that they are obliged to stop at the mouth of the Menan, whereas the Dutch to go up the river as far as the capital of the empire, where their agent constantly resides. Their trade derives no great activity from this privilege. They send only one vessel which transports
Javanese

Javanese horses, and is freighted with sugar, spices and linens; for which they receive in return calin, at 70 livres (3l. 1s. 3d.) a hundred weight; gum lac, at 52, (2l. 5s. 6d.) some elephants teeth, at five livres six sols (4s. 7d. $\frac{1}{2}$) a pound; and a small quantity of gold, at 175 livres 10 sols (7l. 13s. 1d. $\frac{1}{2}$) a mark. One may venture to assert, that their connections here are kept up merely on account of the sappan wood, which is necessary for the stowing of their ships; and for which they give no less than five livres (4s. 4d. $\frac{1}{2}$) per hundred weight. Were it not for this want, they would long ago have given up a trade where the expence exceeds the profits; because the king, who is the only merchant in his dominions, sets a very low price upon the commodities that are imported. A more interesting object turned the ambitious views of the Dutch towards Malacca.

Situation of
the Dutch
at Malacca.

THESE republicans, who knew the importance of this place, used their utmost efforts to make themselves masters of it. Having miscarried in two attempts, they had recourse at last, if we may believe a satirical writer, to an expedient which a virtuous people will never employ; but which frequently answers the purpose of a degenerate nation. They endeavoured to bribe the Portuguese governor, whom they knew to be covetous. The bargain was struck, and he introduced the enemy into the city in 1641. The besiegers hastened to his house and massacred him, to save the payment of the 500,000 livres (21,875l.) they had promised him. But truth obliges us to declare, for the honour of the Portuguese, that they did not surrender till after a most obstinate defence. The commander of the victorious party asked the commander of the other in a boasting strain which is not natural to his nation, when he would come back again to the place? *When your crimes are greater than ours*, replied the Portuguese gravely.

THE

THE conquerors found a fort, which, like all the works of the Portuguese, was built with a degree of strength that has never since been imitated by any nation. They found the climate very healthy, though hot and damp : but the trade there was entirely decayed ; the continual exactions having deterred all nations from resorting thither. It has not been revived by the company, either on account of some insuperable difficulties, or the want of moderation, or the fear of injuring Batavia. The business is confined at present to the sale of a small quantity of opium, and a few blue linens, and to the purchase of elephants teeth, calin, which costs 70 livres (3l. 1s. 3d.) per hundred weight, and a small quantity of gold, at 180 livres (7l. 17s. 6d.) a mark. Their affairs would be carried on with more spirit and to a greater amount, if the princes adhered more faithfully to the exclusive treaty subsisting between them. Unfortunately for their interests, they have formed connections with the English, who furnish them with the commodities they want at a cheaper rate, and give a greater price for their merchandise. Their farms and customs make them some little amends, bringing in 200,000 livres (8,750l.) a year. These revenues, however, and the advantages of commerce taken together, are not sufficient to maintain the garrison and people employed ; which costs the company 40,000 livres (1,750l.)

THIS might for a long time appear to be a small sacrifice. Before the Europeans doubled the cape of Good Hope, the Moors, who were the only maritime people in India, sailed from Surat and Bengal, to Malacca, where they found ships from the Molucca islands, Japan, and China. When the Portuguese became masters of this place, they went themselves to Bantam for pepper, and to Ternate for spices. To

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make their return the shorter, they attempted a passage by the Sunda islands, and succeeded. The Dutch, who had got possession of Malacca and Batavia, were masters of the two only straits that were then known. They cruised there in times of war, and intercepted the enemy's vessels. This situation has ceased to be respectable, since the strait of Bali was discovered by the French at the end of the war in 1744, and that of Lomboc by the English in the last war. Batavia will always continue to be the staple of an immense trade; but Malacca loses the only advantage that gave it any importance.

Settlement
of the Dutch
at Ceylon.

THOUGH the company did not foresee this event, yet at the same time that they were enlarging and strengthening their power in the eastern parts of Asia, they formed the project of securing to themselves that part of India, where the Portuguese continued to counteract their operations, and of taking from them the island of Ceylon. It is observable that this nation, so distinguished for the justness of its commercial views, endeavoured to get those productions into its hands, which were either absolutely necessary or nearly so, before it turned its attention to articles of luxury. It owes its grandeur in Asia to the spice trade, and in Europe to the herring fishery. The Moluccas supply it with nutmegs and cloves; and Ceylon furnishes it with cinnamon.

SPILBERG, the first of their admirals who had the courage to display his colours on the coast of this delicious island, found the Portuguese employed in subverting the government and the religion of the country; in exciting the sovereigns, among whom it was divided, to destroy each other; and in raising themselves upon the ruins of the states that were thus successively demolished. He offered the court of Candy the assistance of his country, which was joyfully accepted.

cepted. *You may assure your masters*, said the monarch, *that if they will build a fort, myself, my wife, and children will be foremost in bringing the necessary materials.*

THE people of Ceylon looked upon the Dutch in no other light than as the enemies of their oppressors, and joined them. By their united forces, the Portuguese were, in the year 1658, entirely dispossessed, after a long, bloody, and obstinate war. All their settlements fell into the hands of the company, who still keep possession of them, excepting a small district on the eastern coast, without any port, from whence the sovereign of the country had his salt; these settlements formed a regular string, extending from two to twelve leagues into the inland parts of the island.

THE fort of Jaffranapatan, as well as those erected on the islands of Manar and Calpentine, were destined to prevent all correspondence with the inhabitants of the neighbouring continent. At Negombo, designed to comprehend the district in which the best cinnamon is produced, there is a harbour large enough to admit sloops: but it is not frequented, on account of a navigable river that leads from it to Columbo. This place, which the Portuguese had fortified with the greatest care, as the center of opulence, is become the principal station in the colony. It is not improbable that, independent of the sums which had been expended upon it, the badness of its road might have determined the Dutch to fix the strength of their government at the promontory of Galla; where there is a harbour; which, though the entrance is indeed difficult, and the basin very confined, has every other advantage that can be wished. It is here that the company take in their cargoes for Europe.

MATARAN is the magazine for coffee and pepper, the culture of which has been introduced by the com-

pany. It has no other fortification than a redoubt built upon a river that is only navigable for boats. Trinquimale is the finest and best harbour in India. It is composed of several bays, where the most numerous fleets may anchor in security. No trade is carried on there. The country furnishes no one article of merchandise; and even provisions are very scarce: in short, it is protected by its barrenness. Other settlements of inferior note that are scattered upon the coast, serve to make the communication easy, and to keep off strangers.

By these wise precautions, the company have appropriated all the productions of the island. The several articles which constitute so many branches of trade are; 1. Amethysts, sapphires, topazes, and rubies which are very small, and very indifferent. The Moors, who come from the coast of Coromandel, buy them, paying a moderate tax; and, when they are cut, sell them at a low price in the different countries of India.

2. PEPPER, which the company buy for eight sols (about 4d.) a pound; coffee, for which the only pay four (about 2d.); and cardamom, which has no fixed price. The natives of the country are so indolent, that these productions, which are all of an inferior quality, will never turn to any great advantage.

3. A HUNDRED bales of handkerchiefs, pagnes and ginghams, of a fine red colour, which are fabricated by the Malabars at Jaffrapatan, where they have long been settled.

4. A SMALL quantity of ivory, and about fifty elephants, which are carried to the coast of Coromandel. Thus this gentle and peaceful animal, which is too useful to mankind to be suffered to remain upon an island, is transported to the continent, to aggravate and bear a part in the dangers and horrors of war.

5. ARECA,

5. ARECA, which the company buys at the rate of ten livres (8s. 9d.) the ammonan, and sells upon the spot at thirty-six or forty livres (about 1l. 13s.) to the merchants of Bengal, Coromandel, and the Maldives; who give in return rice, coarse linens, and cowries. The areca, which grows upon a species of palm-tree, is a fruit not uncommon in most parts of Asia, and is in great plenty at Ceylon. It is oval, and would not be much unlike the date, if its extremities were less pointed. The bark is thick, smooth, and membranaceous, and covers a kernel of a whitish cast, shaped like a pear, and of the bigness of a nutmeg. When eaten by itself, as it sometimes is by the Indians, it impoverishes the blood, and causes the jaundice. It is not attended with these inconveniencies when mixed with betel.

THE betel is a creeping and climbing plant like the ivy, but does no injury to the agoti, which it embraces as its support, and is remarkably fond of. It is cultivated in the same manner as the vine. Its leaves a good deal resemble those of the citron, though they are longer and narrower at the extremity. The betel grows in all parts of India, but flourishes best in moist places.

AT all times of the day, and even in the night, the Indians chew the leaves of the betel, the bitterness of which is corrected by the areca that is wrapped up in them. There is constantly mixed with it the chinam, a kind of burnt lime made of shells. The rich frequently add perfumes, either to gratify their vanity or their sensuality.

It would be thought a breach of politeness among the Indians to take leave for any long time, without presenting each other with a purse of betel. It is a pledge of friendship that relieves the pain of absence. No one dares to speak to a superior unless his mouth

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is perfumed with betel ; it would even be rude to neglect this precaution with an equal. The women of gallantry are the most lavish in the use of betel, as being a powerful incentive to love. Betel is taken after meals ; it is chewed during a visit ; it is offered when you meet, and when you separate ; in short, nothing is to be done without betel. If it is prejudicial to the teeth, it assists and strengthens the stomach. At least, it is a general fashion that prevails throughout India.

6. THE pearl fishery, which is also one of the sources of the revenue of Ceylon. It is no improbable conjecture, that this island, which is only fifteen leagues from the continent, was at some distant period separated from it by some great convulsion of nature. The tract of sea, which at present divides it from the land, is so full of shallows, that no ships can sail upon it ; and there are only a few places where small boats may pass in four or five feet water. The Dutch, who assume the sovereignty here, have always two armed sloops to enforce the payment of the taxes they have imposed. In this strait the pearl fishery is carried on, which was formerly of so much importance ; but this source of wealth has been so much exhausted, that it is but rarely resorted to. The bank, indeed, is visited every year, to see how it is replenished with oysters ; but, in general, it is five or six years before a sufficient quantity is to be found. The fishery is then farmed out ; and, every thing computed, it may produce to the revenues of the company 200,000 livres (8,750*l*.) Upon the same coasts is found a shell-fish called xanxus, of which the Indians at Bengal make bracelets. The fishery is free, but the trade is exclusive.

AFTER

AFTER all, the great object of the company is cinnamon. The root of the tree that produces it is large, and divides it into several branches covered with a bark, which on the outer side is of a greyish brown, and on the inner of a reddish cast. The wood of this root is hard, white, and has no smell. The body of the tree, which grows to the height of eight or ten toises, is covered as well as its numerous branches, with a bark which at first is green, and afterwards red. The leaf, if it were not longer and narrower, would not be much unlike that of the laurel. When first unfolded it is of a flame colour: but after it has been for some time exposed to the air, and grows dry, it changes to a deep green on the upper surface, and to a lighter on the lower. The flowers are small and white, and grow in large bunches at the extremity of the branches; they have an agreeable smell, something like that of the lily of the valley. The fruit is shaped like an acorn, but is not so large. It is commonly ripe in September. When boiled in water, it yields an oil which swims at top, and takes fire. If left to cool, it hardens into a white substance, of which candles are made, which have an agreeable smell, and are reserved for the use of the king of Ceylon. No part of the tree that produces the cinnamon is valuable except the under bark. The best season for raising and separating it from the outer bark, which is grey and rugged, is the spring, when the sap flows in the greatest abundance. It is cut into thin slices, and exposed to the sun; and curls up in drying.

THE old trees produce a coarse kind of cinnamon, which is in perfection only when the trees are not older than three or four years. When the trunk has been stripped of its bark it receives no further nourishment, but the root is still alive, and continues to throw out fresh shoots. Besides this, the fruit
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of the cinnamon-tree contains a seed from which it is raised.

THERE are some of the company's territories where this tree does not grow. It is only to be found in those of Negombo, Columbo, or the promontory of Galla. The prince's forest supply the deficiency which sometimes prevails in the magazines. The mountains inhabited by the Bedas abound with the tree: but neither the Europeans nor the Cinglases are allowed access to them, and there is no way of sharing the riches of the Bedas but by declaring war against them.

As the Cinglases, as well as the Indians upon the continent, are divided into casts which never make any alliances with one another, each constantly adhering to the same profession; the art of barking the cinnamon-trees is a distinct occupation, and the meanest of all others, and is confined to the cast of the Cooleys. Every other islander would look upon it as a disgrace to be employed in this trade.

THE cinnamon is not reckoned excellent unless it be fine, smooth, brittle, thin, of a yellow colour inclining to red, fragrant, aromatic, and of a poignant, yet agreeable taste. The connoisseurs give the preference to that, the pieces of which are long but slender. It adds to the delicacies of the table, and is of sovereign use in medicine.

THE Dutch purchase the greatest part of their cinnamon of the Indians who are subject to them. They have engaged to take a limited quantity of the king of Candy, at an advanced price. Setting one against the other, it does not cost them twelve sols (about 6d.) a pound. It would not be impossible for the ships that frequent the ports of Ceylon, to procure the tree that produces the cinnamon; but it has degenerated at Malabar, Batavia, the

the isle of France, and in all parts where it has been transplanted.

FORMERLY the company thought it necessary to maintain four thousand black or white soldiers, to secure the advantages they derived from Ceylon. The number is now reduced to fifteen or sixteen hundred. Their annual expences, nevertheless, amount to 2,200,000 livres (96,250*l.*); and their revenues, and small branches of commerce, produce no more than 2,000,000 of livres (87,500*l.*) This deficiency is supplied out of the profits arising from cinnamon. They are likewise obliged to provide for the expence attending the wars they are from time to time engaged in with the king of Candy, who is at present the sole sovereign of the island.

THE Dutch freely own that these ruptures are fatal to them. As soon as they break out, most of the people who inhabit the coasts retire into the inland parts of the country. Notwithstanding the despotism that awaits them, they look upon the yoke of the Europeans as an evil still more insupportable. The Cooleys are so far from always waiting for the commencement of hostilities as a signal for their removal, that they sometimes resolve to take this desperate step as soon as they perceive the least misunderstanding between the king and the Dutch. On these occasions, besides the loss of a harvest, a long train of expence and fatigue follows, to enable them to penetrate, sword in hand, into a country, encompassed on all sides by rivers, woods, hollow vales, and mountains.

THESE important considerations had determined the company to engage the good will of the king of Candy, by shewing him all imaginable civilities. Every year they sent an ambassador laden with rich presents. They offered their ships to convey his priests to Siam, to be instructed in the religion of that

that country, which is the same with his own. Notwithstanding they had taken the forts and the lands which were occupied by the Portuguese, they contented themselves with receiving from this prince the appellation of *guardians of his coasts*. They also made him several other concessions.

THESE singular instances of management have not, however, been always sufficient to maintain good harmony, which has several times been interrupted. The war which ended on the 14th of February, 1766, had been the longest and the most active of any that had been occasioned by distrust, and the clashing of interests. As the company prescribed terms to a monarch who was driven from his capital, and obliged to wander in the woods, they made a very advantageous treaty. Their sovereignty was acknowledged over all the countries they were in possession of before the troubles broke out; and that part of the coasts which remained in the occupation of the natives was ceded to them. They are to be allowed to gather cinnamon in all the plains, and the court is to sell them the best sort that is produced in the mountainous parts at the rate of forty-one livres five sols (11. 16s. 1d.) for eighteen pounds. Their commissaries are authorised to extend their trade to all parts where they think it can be carried on with advantage. The government engages to have no connection with any other foreign power; and even to deliver up any Europeans who may happen to stray into the island. In return for so many concessions, the king is to receive annually the value of the produce of the ceded coasts: and from thence his subjects are to be furnished gratis with salt sufficient for their consumption. It should seem that the company may derive great advantages from so favourable a situation.

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THE property of the lands in Ceylon belongs no more of right to the sovereign than in any other part of India. This pernicious system has in that island been attended with fatal consequences inseparable from it. The people are in a state of total inactivity. They live in huts, have no furniture, and subsist upon fruits; and those who are the most affluent, have no other covering than a piece of coarse linen wrapped about their waist. It were to be wished that the Dutch would pursue a scheme, which all the nations who have established colonies in Asia, are to blame never to have attempted, and that is, to distribute the lands among the families, and make them their own property. They would forget, and perhaps hate their former sovereign; they would attach themselves to a government that consulted their happiness; they would become industrious, and occasion a greater consumption. Under such circumstances the island of Ceylon would enjoy that opulence which was designed it by nature: it would be secure from revolutions, and be enabled to support the settlements of Malabar and Coromandel, which it is bound to protect.

THE Portuguese, in the time of their prosperity, had formed some tolerable settlements on the coast of Coromandel. That at Negapatan was taken from them by the Dutch in 1658. It gradually increased to ten or twelve villages, which were all inhabited by weavers. In 1690, it was thought proper to build a fort to secure their tranquillity, and in 1742 the tower was surrounded by walls. This is the central place into which all the white, blue, painted, printed, fine and coarse linens are brought, which the company collects for the consumption of Europe or India: and which come either from Bimilipatnam, Pellicate, Sadraspatan, or from its factories on the fishing coast. Their investments, which commonly amount

Trade of
the Dutch
on the coast
of Coromandel.

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amount to four or five thousand bales, are carried to Negapatan, by two sloops stationed in these seas for that purpose.

THE Dutch sell, on the coast of Coromandel, iron, lead, copper, calin, tutenague, pepper, and spices. These united articles produce a million of livres (43,750l.) to which we may add eighty thousand (3,500l.) arising from the customs. The expences of their several establishments amount to eight hundred thousand livres (35,000l.); and we may venture to assert without fear of being accused of exaggeration, that the freight of the ships swallows up the rest of the profits. The net produce therefore of the Coromandel trade to the company, is the profit arising from the linens they export from thence. Their trade on the Malabar coast is still less advantageous to them. It commenced pretty nearly at the same period, and was established at the expence of the same nation.

Trade of
the Dutch
on the coast
of Malabar.

It appears to be no difficult task to guess at the motives that led to this new enterprise. After the Portuguese had lost Ceylon, they sold the wild cinnamon of Malabar in Europe nearly for the same price as they had always sold the right sort. Though this rivalry could not continue long, it gave uneasiness to the Dutch, who, in 1662, ordered Vangoens, their general, to attack Cochin.

THE place was no sooner invested, than intelligence was received of a peace being concluded between Holland and Portugal. This news was kept secret. The operations were carried on with vigour; and the besieged, harassed by continual assaults, surrendered on the eighth day. They next day a frigate arrived from Goa with the articles of peace. The conquerors gave themselves no further trouble to justify their treachery, than by saying, that those who complained

complained in so haughty a stile, had observed the same conduct at Brazil a few years before.

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AFTER this conquest, the Dutch thought themselves firmly established in Malabar. Cochin seemed to be necessary to protect Cananor, Cranganor, and Quillon, of which they had just before made themselves masters, and the factory of Porcat, which they had formed the plan of at that time, and have since actually established. The event has not answered their expectation. The company have not succeeded in their hopes of excluding other European nations from this coast. They procure no kind of merchandise there, but what they are furnished with from their other settlements; and being rivalled in their trade they are obliged to give a higher price here, than in the markets where they enjoy an exclusive privilege.

THEIR articles of sale consist of a small quantity of alum, benzoin, camphire, tutenague, sugar, iron, calin, lead, copper, and quicksilver. The vessel that carries this slender cargo returns to Batavia laden with caire, or cocoa-tree bark, for the use of the port. By these articles the company gain, at most, 360,000 livres (15,750*l.*) which, with 120,000 (5,250*l.*) arising from the customs, make the sum of 480,000 livres (21,000*l.*) In times of profound peace the maintenance of these settlements costs 464,000 livres (20,300*l.*) so that 16,000 (700*l.*) only, remain to defray the expences of their shipping, for which that sum is certainly not sufficient.

It is true, the company gets two millions weight of pepper from Malabar, which is carried in sloops to Ceylon, where it is put aboard the ships fitted out for Europe. It is likewise true, that, by virtue of these capitulations, they pay only 192 livres (8*l.* 8*s.*) the candil, which weighs five hundred pounds, for which other companies give 240 (10*l.* 10*s.*) and private

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vate merchants 288 (12l. 12s.); but whatever advantage may be made of this article, it is reduced to nothing by the bloody wars it occasions.

THESE observations had doubtless escaped the notice of Golonefs, the director-general of Batavia, when he ventured to affirm that the settlement of Malabar which he had long superintended, was one of the most important settlements belonging to the company. "I am so far from being of your opinion," said general Mossel, that I could wish the sea had "swallowed it up about a century ago."

The Dutch
form a set-
tlement at
the Cape of
Good Hope.

BE this as it may, the Dutch, in the height of their success, felt the want of a place where their vessels might put in to get refreshments, either in going to, or returning from India. They were undetermined in their choice, when Van-Riebeck the surgeon, in 1650, proposed the Cape of Good Hope, which the Portuguese had imprudently despised. This judicious man, during a stay of some weeks, was convinced that a colony might be placed to advantage on this southern extremity of Africa, which might serve as a staple for the commerce of Europe and Asia. The care of forming this settlement was committed to him; and his measures were concerted upon a good plan. He caused it to be stipulated that every man who chose to fix there should have sixty acres of land allotted him. Corn, cattle, and utensils were to be provided for those who wanted them. Young women taken from alms-houses were given them as companions to soften, and to share their fatigues. All those, who after three years found the climate did not agree with them, had liberty to return to Europe, and to dispose of their possessions in what manner they pleased. Having settled these arrangements he set sail.

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THE large tract of country which it was proposed to cultivate, was inhabited by the Hottentots, who, according to a French traveller, are divided into several clans, each of which forms an independent village. Their habitations are huts covered with skins, which cannot be entered without creeping upon their hands and knees, and are disposed in a circle. These huts are hardly of any other use than to hold a few provisions and household furniture. The Hottentots never enter them but in the rainy season. They are always found lying at their doors; and if they interrupt their repose it is to smoke a strong herb which serves them instead of tobacco.

THE management of cattle is the sole employment of these savages. As there is but one herd in each town which is common to all the inhabitants, each of them is appointed to guard it in his turn. This post requires constant vigilance, the country being full of wild beasts, which are more voracious at this extremity of Africa than in any other part. The shepherd sends out scouts every day. If a leopard or tyger is seen in the neighbourhood, the whole town takes up arms, and flies to the enemy, who seldom escapes from so many poisoned arrows, and sharp stakes hardened in the fire.

As the Hottentots neither have, nor appear to have riches, and that their oxen and sheep, which is all the property they have, are in common; it is natural to imagine that there is little occasion for disputes among them. They are accordingly united to each other by the closest ties of friendship: nor do they ever engage in any war, even with their neighbours; setting aside the quarrels between the shepherds on account of cattle that may have strayed, or been carried off.

It has often been remarked that public customs gave rise to the first colonies. Marks of distinction

were

were adopted to make men unite and recognize one another. A broken nose, a flat head, bored ears, paintings, burnings, head-dresses, are the uniform characteristics of the savage world. As no plan of morality or education prevails among them, it follows of course, that universal customs must with them supply the place of policy and government. These uncivilized men, the children of nature, depend entirely on the temper of the climate: and hence the Hottentots have the manners of ploughmen.

WHEN the Dutch arrived, the Hottentots were, like all people who lead a pastoral life, full of benevolence; and partook in some degree of the uncleanness and stupidity of the animals they kept. They had instituted an order, with which they honoured those who had subdued any of the monsters that were destructive to their sheepfolds: and they revered the memory of the heroes who had done service to mankind. The apotheosis of Hercules had the same origin.

RIEBECK, in conformity to the notions unhappily prevailing among the Europeans, began to take possession of the most commodious part of the territory; and he afterwards designed to fix himself there. This behaviour displeased the natives. *On what pretence, said their envoy to these strangers, have you sown our lands? Why do you employ them to feed your cattle? How would you behave if you saw your own fields invaded in this manner? You fortify yourselves with no other view than to reduce the Hottentots to slavery.* These remonstrances were followed by some hostilities, which brought the founder of the colony back to those principles of justice and humanity, that were agreeable to his natural character, he purchased the country he wanted to occupy for the sum of 90,000 livres (3,937l. 10s.) which was paid in merchandise. All parties were reconciled, and from that period to the present time, there has been no further disturbance.

It has been proved that the company have expended 46,000,000 of livres (2,012,500*l.*) in raising the colony to its present state. A few particulars will enable us to judge how so considerable a sum has been employed.

It is computed that there are at the Cape of Good Hope about twelve thousand Europeans, Dutch, Germans, and French refugees. Some part of these numbers reside in the capital, and two considerable towns: the rest are dispersed along the coast, which extends fifty leagues into the country. The soil of the Hottentots being sandy, and only good by intervals; the husbandmen chuse to confine themselves to those places where they meet with water, wood, and fertile lands; three advantages seldom found together.

THE company formerly procured slaves from Madagascar, who alleviated the burthen of the white people. Since the French appeared as rivals, this communication has been discontinued. The present planters consist of a few Malays, who are unaccustomed to that climate, and are scarce fit for the work that is required of them.

If it were practicable to make the Hottentots steady, great advantages might accrue, which cannot be hoped for from their present character. All that has yet been done, has been to prevail with the poorest of them to engage in their service for one, two, or three years. They are of a docile temper, and perform the work that is expected from them; but at the expiration of their agreement, they take the cattle that are allowed them for wages, rejoin their clan, and never make their appearance again till they have oxen or sheep to barter for knives, tobacco, and brandy. They find an inexpressible charm in the independent and indolent life they lead in their deserts. Nothing can wean them from this attachment. One of

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their children was taken from the cradle, and instructed in our manners and religion; he made a progress answerable to the pains that were bestowed upon his education; he was sent to India, and usefully employed in trade. Happening, by accident, to revisit his country, he went to see his relations in their hut. He was struck with the simplicity that appeared there; he clothed himself with a sheep-skin, and went to the fort to carry back his European habiliments. *I am come, said he to the governor, to renounce for ever the mode of life you have taught me to embrace. I am resolved to follow, till death, the manners and religion of my ancestors. As a token of my affection, I will keep the collar and sword you have given me: all the rest you will permit me to leave behind.* He did not wait for an answer, but ran away, and was never heard of after.

THOUGH the character of the Hottentots is not such as the Dutch could wish, the company derive solid advantages from this colony. Indeed, the tenth part of the corn and wine, together with their customs and other duties, does not exceed 240,000 livres (10,500*l.*) They gain no more than 40,000 (1,750*l.*) by their thick cloths, common thread and cotton pieces, hardware, coals, and other considerable articles, which they vend at this place.

THEY receive a still smaller profit from sixty lecques of red wine, and eighty or ninety of white, which they carry to Europe every year. The lecque weighs about twelve hundred pounds. There are only two places in the neighbourhood of Constantia that produce this wine. The company might have it entirely genuine, and at a very low rate. Happily the governor finds it his interest to allow the cultivators to mix it with the produce of the adjacent vineyards. By this management what remains of this celebrated wine, the genuine excellent Cape wine, is sold to foreign

reign vessels that happen to touch at the coasts at four livres (3s. 6d.) a bottle. It is generally preferable to that which is extorted by tyranny; nothing good being to be expected where it is not voluntarily obtained.

As the expences necessary for the support of so large a settlement, swallow up, at least, all these profits taken together, its utility must rest upon some other foundation.

THE Dutch ships that sail to and from India find a safe asylum at the Cape; a delightful serene, and temperate sky, and learn every thing of importance that happens in both those parts of the globe. Here they take in butter, meal, wine, large quantities of pickled vegetables for their voyage, and for the use of the colonies. They might derive much greater advantages from hence, if the company, blinded by their avidity, were not perpetually checking the industry of the planters. They oblige them to part with their provisions at so low a price, that they have not, for a long time, been able to procure cloathing and other absolute necessities.

THIS tyrannical conduct might, perhaps, be borne with, if the victims of it were authorised to sell their superfluous produce to foreign navigators, whom the convenience of their situation, or other reasons, might invite into their ports. But a spirit of jealousy in trade, which is one of the greatest evils that can befall mankind, has deprived them of this resource. The Dutch have long flattered themselves, that by withholding this convenience from other trading nations, they should make them abandon India in disgust. Notwithstanding they have experienced the reverse of this, their conduct is not altered; though it was easy to discern, that all the wealth which flowed into the colony would, sooner or later, return to the company. The governor only is authorised to supply

the most pressing necessities of those who touch at the Cape. These wrong measures, have been, as they must necessarily be, the source of a thousand inconveniences.

WE must, however, do justice to M. Tolbac, who at present presides over this colony. This generous man, during the last war, set an example of benevolence and disinterestedness, which was not to be found in any of his predecessors. As his understanding raised him above prejudice, and that he had a sufficient degree of firmness to deviate from the absurd orders he received, he encouraged the nations who endeavoured to supplant one another to repair to his colony for subsistence. The price was so regulated by so just a standard, that while it was so moderate as to invite purchasers, it was high enough to animate the cultivators to industry. May this wise magistrate long enjoy the pleasing consciousness of having made the fortune of his fellow-citizens, and the glory of having neglected his own!

IF the company should adopt his plan, they will imitate the spirit of their founders, who did nothing by chance; and, without waiting for the happy events we have been describing, they will set themselves to find out a place, which they may make the center of their power. They had cast their eyes upon Java as early as the year 1609.

Dominions
of the Dutch
in the island
of Java.

THE people of this island, which is two hundred leagues in length, and thirty or forty in breadth, traced their origin from China, though they retained nothing either of its religion or its manners. A very superstitious species of Mohammedism constituted the prevailing worship. Some idolaters were still remaining in the interior part of the country: and these were the only inhabitants of Java that were not arrived at the last stage of depravity. This island which was formerly

merly under the dominion of a single monarch, was at that time divided among several sovereigns, who were perpetually at war with each other. These eternal dissensions, while they kept up a military spirit among the people, made them neglect manners. Their enmity to strangers, and want of confidence in each other, would lead one to conclude, that they breathed no sentiment but hatred. Here men were wolves to each other, and seemed to unite in society more for the sake of committing mutual injuries, than of receiving mutual assistances. A Javanese never accosted his brother without having a poniard in his hand; ever watchful to prevent, or prepared to commit some act of violence. The nobles had a great number of slaves, either bought, taken in war, or detained for debt, whom they treated with the utmost inhumanity. They cultivated the lands, and performed all kinds of hard labour; while the Javanese was employed in chewing betel, smoking opium, passing his life with his concubines, fighting or sleeping. These people possessed a considerable share of understanding, but retained few traces of any moral principle. They had not so much the character of an unenlightened, as of a degenerated nation: in short, they were a set of men, who from a regular government had fallen into a kind of anarchy; and gave full scope to the impetuous emotions which nature excites in these climates.

THIS depraved character of the inhabitants did not alter the views of the Dutch with respect to Java. Their company might, indeed, be thwarted by the English, who were then in possession of a part of the trade of this island. But this obstacle was soon removed. The weakness of James the First, and the corruption of his council, had so damped the spirits of these haughty Britons, that they suffered themselves to be supplanted, without making those efforts that might have been expected from their bravery. The natives
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of the country, deprived of this support, were forced to submit; but it required time, address, and policy, to accomplish that scheme.

It was one of the fundamental maxims of the Portuguese to persuade those princes they wanted to engage or retain in a state of dependence, to send their children to Goa to be educated at the expence of the court of Lisbon, and initiated early into its manners and principles. But this, which was in itself a good project, was spoiled by the conquerors, who admitted these young people to a participation of the most criminal pleasures, and the most shameful scenes of debauchery. The consequence was, that when these Indians arrived at maturity, they could not help detesting, or, at least, despising such abandoned instructors. The Dutch adopted the same plan, and improved upon it. They endeavoured to convince their pupils of the weakness, inconstancy, and treachery of their subjects; and still more of their power, wisdom, and good faith of the company. By this method they strengthened their usurpations: but we are obliged to say, that the Dutch employed means that were treacherous and cruel.

THE government of the island, which was founded entirely on the feudal laws, seemed calculated to promote discord. Fathers and sons turned their arms against each other. They supported the pretensions of the weak against the strong, and of the strong against the weak, as they saw occasion. They sometimes took the monarch's part, and sometimes that of his vassals. If any person ascended the throne, who was likely to become formidable by his talents, they raised up rivals to oppose him. Those who were not to be seduced by gold or promises, were subdued by fear. Every day was productive of some revolution which was always begun by the intrigues of the tyrants, and always ended to their advantage. At length they became mas-
ters

ters of the most important posts in the inland parts of the country; and of the forts that were built upon the coasts. BOOK
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THIS plan of usurpation was but just ready to be carried into execution, when a governor was appointed at Java, who had a palace and guards, and appeared in great pomp. The company thought proper to depart from the principles of œconomy they had hitherto adopted; from a persuasion, that the Portuguese had derived a great advantage from the brilliant court kept by the viceroy of Goa; that the people of the East were to be dazzled in order to be the more easily subdued: and that it was necessary to strike the imagination and the eyes of the Indians, who are guided more by their senses than the inhabitants of our climates.

THE Dutch had another reason for assuming an air of dignity. They had been represented in Asia as pirates, without a country, without laws, and without a ruler. To silence these calumnies, they endeavoured to prevail with several states adjoining to Java to send ambassadors to prince Maurice of the house of Orange.

THE execution of this project procured them a double advantage, as it gave them credit with the eastern nations, and flattered the ambition of the Stadtholder, whose protection was necessary to be obtained, for reasons which we are going to explain.

WHEN the company obtained their exclusive privilege, the straits of Magellan, which could have no connection with the East Indies, were improperly enough included in the grant. Isaac Lemaire, one of those rich and enterprising merchants, who ought every where to be considered as the benefactors of their country, formed the project of penetrating into the South Sea by the southern coasts. Access being denied by the only track that was known at that time;

he

he fitted out two ships which passed a strait, since called by his name, running between Cape Horn and Staten land; and were driven by accidents to the coast of Java, where they were condemned, and the crew sent prisoners to Europe.

THIS tyrannical proceeding gave offence to the people, already prejudiced against an exclusive commerce. It was thought absurd, that instead of giving those who attempted discoveries the encouragement they deserved, a state purely commercial should forge shackles to confine their industry. The monopoly, which the avarice of individuals had endured with impatience, became more odious when the company stretched the concessions that had been made them beyond their due bounds. It was found, that as their pride and influence increased with their power, the interest of the nation would at length be sacrificed to the interest, or even to the caprice of this formidable body. It is probable, that they must have sunk under the public resentment; and that the charter which was near expiring, would not have been renewed, if they had not been supported by prince Maurice, favoured by the States-General, and encouraged to brave the storm by the strength they derived from their settlement at Java.

THOUGH the tranquillity of this island may have been disturbed by various commotions, several wars, and some conspiracies, it continues to be as much in subjection to the Dutch as they wish it to be.

BANTAM comprehends the western part. One of its sovereigns having resigned the crown to his son, was restored to the throne in 1680 by the natural restlessness of his temper, the bad conduct of his successor, and a powerful faction. His party was on the point of prevailing, when the young monarch, besieged in his capital by an army of thirty thousand men, without any adherents, except the companions,
of

of his debaucheries, implored the protection, of the Dutch. They flew to his assistance beat his enemies, delivered him from his rival, and re-established his authority. Though the expedition was speedy, short, and rapid, and consequently could not be expensive; they contrived to make the charges of the war amount to a prodigious sum. The situation of things would not admit of a scrutiny into the sum demanded for so great a piece of service, and the exhausted state of the finances made it impossible to discharge it. In this extremity this weak prince determined to entail slavery on himself and his descendants, by granting to his deliverers the exclusive trade of his dominions.

THE company maintain this great privilege with three hundred and sixty-eight men, who are stationed in two bad forts, one of which serves as a habitation for the governor, and the other as a palace for the king. The expences of this settlement amount to no more than 100,000 livres (4,375l.) which are regained upon the merchandise sold there. Their clear profits consist of what they gain upon three millions weight of pepper, which they oblige the inhabitants to sell at twenty-five livres twelve sols (11. 2s. 4d. $\frac{3}{4}$) a hundred.

THESE profits are inconsiderable in comparison of what the company receives from Trieribon, which it subdued without any efforts, without intrigues, and without expence. The Dutch were scarce settled at Java, when the sultan of this narrow but very fertile state put himself under their protection, to avoid submitting to a neighbouring prince more powerful than himself. He sells them annually a thousand lasts of rice, each weighing three thousand three hundred pounds, at seventy-six livres sixteen sols (about 31. 7s. 2d. $\frac{1}{4}$) a last; a million weight of sugar, the finest of which cost thirteen livres nine sols (about 11s. 9d.)

11s. 9d.) a hundred; one million two hundred thousand pounds of coffee, at four sols (2d.) a pound; a hundred quintals of pepper at four sols eight deniers (about 2d. $\frac{1}{2}$) a pound; thirty thousand pounds of cotton, the finest of which costs no more than one livre eight sols (about 1s. 2d. $\frac{1}{2}$) a pound; six hundred thousand pounds of areca, at twelve livres (10s. 6d.) a hundred. Though fixing these prices so low is a manifest imposition upon the weakness of the inhabitants the people of Tseribon, who are the most gentle and civilized of any in the island, have never been provoked by this injustice to take up arms. A hundred Europeans are sufficient to keep them in subjection. The expences of this settlement amount to no more than 41,000 livres, (1,793l. 15s.) which is gained by linens imported thither.

THE empire of Mataram, which formerly extended over the whole island, and at the present takes up the greatest part of it, was the last that was reduced to subjection. Often vanquished, and sometimes vanquishing, it continued its struggles for independency, when the son and brother of a sovereign who died in 1704, disputed the succession. The nation was divided between the two rivals. He who was entitled to the crown by order of succession, had so visibly the advantage, that he must soon have got the supreme power entirely into his hands, if the Dutch had not declared in favour of his rival. The party espoused by these republicans, at length prevailed after a series of contests, more active, frequent, well conducted, and obstinate, than could have been expected. The young prince, whom they wanted to deprive of his succession to the king his father, displayed so much intrepidity, prudence and firmness, that he would have triumphed over his enemies, had it not been for the advantage they derived from their magazines, forts, and ships.

His

His uncle usurped his throne ; but shewed himself unworthy to fill it.

WHEN the company restored him to the crown, they dictated laws to him. They chose the place where his court was to be fixed, and secured his attachment by a citadel in which a guard was maintained, with no other apparent view than to protect the prince. After all these precautions, they employed every artifice to lull his attention by pleasures, to gratify his avarice by presents, and to flatter his vanity by pompous embassies. From this æra, the prince and his successors, who were educated suitably to the part they were to act, were nothing more than the despicable tools of the despotism of the company. All that is necessary for their support, is three hundred horse and four hundred soldiers, whose maintenance, including the pay of the agents, costs them 760,000 livres (33,250*l*.)

THE company are amply reimbursed for this expence by the advantages it secures them. The harbours of this state afford docks for the construction of all the small vessels and sloops employed in the company's service. They are supplied from hence with all the timber that is wanted in their several Indian settlements, and in part of their foreign colonies. Here too they load their vessels with the productions with which the kingdom is obliged to furnish them ; consisting of five thousand lasts of rice, at forty-eight livres (2*l*. 2*s*.) a last ; as much salt as they require, at twenty-eight livres sixteen sols (about 1*l*. 5*s*. 2*d*.) a last ; a hundred thousand pounds of pepper, at nineteen livres sols (16*s*. 9*d*. $\frac{1}{2}$) a hundred ; all the indigo that is raised, at three livres (about 2*s*. 7*d*. $\frac{1}{2}$) a pound ; cadjang, for the use of their ships, at seventy-six livres sixteen sols (about 3*l*. 7*s*. 2*d*. $\frac{1}{2}$) a last ; cotton yarn, from twelve sols to one livre (from about 6*d*. to 1*s*. 3*d*.) a pound, according to its quality : and the
small

small quantity of cardamom that is produced there at a shameful price.

THE island of Madura, which is separated from the ports of Mataram only by a narrow channel, is obliged, by a garrison of fifteen men, to furnish rice at a very low rate. This island, in common with the people of Java, labours under a still more odious oppression. The company's commissaries make use of false measure in order to procure a larger quantity of goods from the people that are to furnish them. This fraud, practised for their own private advantage, has not hitherto been punished; and there is no reason to hope that it ever will. Balambangan is the only district in the island of Java, that is not exposed to these iniquitous practices. The Dutch who slighted it, on account of its furnishing any article of trade, have held no correspondence with it.

FOR the rest, the Dutch having abated the turbulence of the Javanese, by gradually undermining the laws that maintained it; and satisfied with having forced them to give some attention to agriculture, and with having secured to themselves a commerce perfectly exclusive, have not attempted to acquire any property in the island. Their territory extends no further than the small kingdom of Jacatra. The ravages committed by the Dutch when they conquered this state, and the tyranny that followed that conquest, had turned it into a desert. It still remains uncultivated and inactive.

THE Dutch, those of them in particular who go to India to seek their fortunes, were hardly qualified to recover this excellent soil from its exhausted state. It was several times proposed to have recourse to the Germans; and by the encouragements of some advances, and some gratuities, to exercise their industry in a manner the most advantageous to the company. What these

these laborious people might have done in the fields, the silk manufacturers from China, and the linen-weavers from Coromandel might have executed in the workshops, for the improvement of manufactures. As these useful projects did not favour any private views, they continued to be nothing more than projects. At length the governors-general Imhoff and Mossel, struck with the scene of such great disorder, endeavoured to find out a remedy.

WITH this view they sold to the Chinese and the Europeans, at a small price, the lands which the government had acquired by oppressive means. This management has not produced all the good that was expected from it. The new proprietors have seldom ventured to keep any thing upon their estates but sheep and cattle, for which they have an easy, certain and advantageous market. They would have applied themselves to agriculture, which requires more care, greater pecuniary encouragements, and a greater number of hands, if the company did not insist on their furnishing the commodities at the same price they give for them in the rest of the island. At this present time there are no more than a hundred and fifty thousand slaves, who are under the direction of a small number of free men. The produce of their labours consists of two million weight of coffee, a hundred and fifty thousand pounds of pepper, twenty-five thousand pounds of cotton, ten thousand pounds of indigo, ten million of sugar, and six thousand leques of areca. The two last articles have been cultivated with more spirit than the rest, because private persons, having the liberty to purchase and export them, pay twenty per cent. dearer for them than the company.

THESE commodities, as well as all those that are produced in Java, are carried to Batavia, which is built on the ruins of the ancient capital of Jacatra.

A CITY

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A CITY which has become so considerable a mart, must have received many successive improvements. It is well built; the houses though not magnificent, are pleasant, commodious, and well furnished; the streets are broad, running in straight lines, with rows of large trees on each side, and canals cut through them; they are always clean though it has not been thought proper to pave them, for fear of increasing the heat by too strong a reflection of the sun's rays. All the public buildings have an air of grandeur; and the generality of travellers look upon Batavia as one of the finest cities in the world.

THE number of inhabitants, including the suburbs and liberties, does not exceed a hundred thousand. The greatest part of them are slaves. Here are likewise Malaysians, Javanese, free Macassers, who are all of them indolent; and Chinese, who have the exclusive exercise of all trades, are the only cultivators of the sugar-cane, and manage all the manufactures, the number of Europeans may amount to ten thousand; of these, four thousand born in India, are, to an inconceivable degree, degenerated. This strange perversion is probably owing to the generally received custom of committing the care of their education to slaves.

THE corruptions at Batavia have, however, been exaggerated. Dissolute manners are not more prevalent there than in other settlements formed by the Europeans in Asia. It is true, the people drink to excess; but the ties of marriage are held sacred. None but unmarried men keep concubines, who are generally of the rank of slaves. The priests have endeavoured to stop the progress of these connections, which are always secret, by refusing to baptize the offspring of them; but they are become less rigid, since a carpenter belonging to the company, who chose

chose his son should be of some religion or other, took it into his head to have him circumcised.

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LUXURY has maintained its ground more successfully than concubinage. The ladies, who are universally ambitious of distinguishing themselves by the richness of their dress, and the magnificence of their equipage, have carried their taste for finery to excess. They never stir out without a numerous train of slaves; and either ride in magnificent cars, or are carried in superb palanquins. They wear gold or silver tissues, or fine Chinese sattins, with a net of gold thrown over them; and their head-dress is loaded with pearls and diamonds. In 1758 the government attempted to reform these extravagancies by prescribing a mode of dress suitable to each rank. These regulations were received with contempt, means were found to elude, or to purchase an immunity from them, and no change took place. It would, indeed, have been a strange singularity, if they use of precious stones had been discontinued in the country that produced them; and that the Dutch had regulated a species of luxury in India, which they brought from thence with a view of introducing, or increasing it in this part of the world. The force and example of an European government struggle in vain against the laws and manners of the climate of Asia.

THE heats, which might naturally be expected to be excessive at Batavia, are allayed by an agreeable sea-breeze, which begins to blow every day at ten o'clock, and continues till four. The nights are rendered cool by land-breezes, which die away at day-break. It would contribute to make the air as pure as the sky is serene, if the canals were made somewhat deeper, and sluices were constructed. Disorders are not however, very frequent here. The mortality

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lity that prevails among the soldiers and sailors, is rather owing to debauchery, bad provisions and fatigue, than to the inclemency of the climate.

NOTHING can be more agreeable than the environs one or two leagues round the capital. The country is interspersed with delightful villas, plantations that yield an agreeable shade, and gardens finely ornamented, and even disposed with taste. It is the fashion to live there all the year, and the people in office only come to Batavia to transact public business. These charming retreats formerly owed their tranquillity to forts erected at a certain distance from one another, to prevent the incursions of the Javanese. Since these people have contracted a habit of slavery, these redoubts serve as barracks for the refreshment of the recruits, after the fatigues of a long voyage.

BATAVIA is situated at the bottom of a deep bay, containing several islands of a middling size, which resist the impetuosity of the sea. It is properly speaking, a road; but is as safe a retreat from all winds, and in all seasons, as the best harbour. The only inconvenience is the difficulty of going, in stormy weather, aboard the ships that are obliged to anchor at a considerable distance. The ships undergo the necessary repairs at the small island of Onrust; which though two leagues and a half distant, is one of those that chiefly contribute to the goodness of the road. It forms an excellent dock, is well fortified, and never without three or four hundred European carpenters; and as vessels can easily take in their lading there, magazines are erected for the reception of the larger kinds of merchandise intended for exportation. A pretty considerable river, after fertilizing the fields, and refreshing

freshing Batavia, falls into the sea, for no other purpose, as it should seem, than to serve as a channel of communication between the town and the shipping. The lighters that are continually meeting each other in this passage, and formerly drew twelve feet water, are reduced to one-half: the sands and rubbish have formed a bank, which, if suffered to increase, will prove an inconvenience, and occasion a very considerable expence. It is well worth while, on account of the importance of Batavia, to pay a serious attention to every thing that may contribute to the improvement and utility of its road, which is the most important one in India.

ALL the vessels sent out by the company from Europe to Asia touch at Batavia; and except those that go directly from Bengal to Ceylon, they are laden in their return with all the articles of those rich sales, which create among us so much surprize and admiration.

THE expeditions to the different sea-ports of India are hardly less; perhaps they are more considerable. European vessels are employed in this service during the unavoidable stay they are obliged to make in these remote seas.

THIS two-fold navigation is founded upon that which connects all the Dutch settlements with Batavia. Those that lie to the east are led from their situation, the nature of their merchandize, and their wants, to keep up a more frequent correspondence with it than the rest. But all of them are obliged to have pass-ports. Any ship belonging to a private person, that should neglect this precaution, which was taken to prevent fraudulent trade, would be seized by the sloops that are continually cruising in these latitudes. When they arrive at the place of their destination, they deliver to the company such of their commodities as

have reserved the exclusive trade of to themselves, and dispose of the rest to whom they please. The slave-trade, constitutes one of the principal branches of the commerce last mentioned. Six thousand of both sexes are annually carried to Batavia, where they are employed in domestic service, the cultivation of the lands, or manufactures. The Chinese, who cannot bring or invite over any of their country women, make their choice among the slaves.

To these articles of importation may be added those brought every year, by a dozen Chinese junks, from Emoy, Limpo, and Canton. Their cargo is valued at about three millions, (131,250l.) and consists of camphire, porcelain, silk and cotton stuffs, which are used in Batavia and the rest of the Dutch colonies; of unwrought silks, which are bought by the company when they are in any considerable quantity, or which, when they are but few of them, are sold to those who chuse to send them to Macassar or Sumatra, where the great have pagnes made of them; of tea, which was formerly engrossed by the company, but is now given up to private traders, who send it to Europe, where it is sold by the company, who deduct forty per cent. for the freight. This tea is generally bad, and of the coarsest quality.

THE junks, which besides the aforementioned articles regularly bring two thousand Chinese to Java, who come thither in hopes of making their fortunes, carry back stags' pizzles and the fins of the shark, which are reckoned among the delicacies of the table in China. Another article they receive in exchange from Batavia is tripam, to the annual amount of two thousand peculs. Each pecul, weighing a hundred and twenty-five pounds, sells from twelve to forty livres (from 10s. 6d. to 1l. 15s.) according to its quality. It grows only two feet from the sea up-
on

on the barren rocks of the east, and of Cochin-china, from whence it is carried to Batavia, together with those birds' nests so much celebrated all over the east which are found in the same places. A pecul of the last-mentioned merchandise sells from 1,400 to 2,800 livres, (from 61l. 5s. to 122l. 10s.) and the Chinese carry away one thousand. These nests are of an oval shape, an inch high, three inches round, and weigh about half an ounce. They are formed by a species of the swallow; its head, breast, and wings are of a fine blue, and its body milk white. They are composed of the spawn of fish, or of a glutinous froth which the agitation of the sea leaves upon the rocks, to which they are fastened at the bottom and on the side. When seasoned with salt and spices, they make a nourishing, wholesome, and delicious jelly, and are an article of the highest luxury at the tables of the eastern Moham-medans. Their whiteness constitutes their delicacy. The Chinese likewise carry away calin and pepper, though the company reserved the exportation of those articles to themselves. Their principal agents pretend, for their own advantage, that these exportations are not prejudicial to the body which has intrusted its interests to their management.

THE traffic of the Chinese at Batavia, besides the merchandise they export from thence, brings them in some ready money. This wealth is increased by the considerable sums that the Chinese settled at Java remit to their families, and by the sums sooner or later amassed by those, who, content with their fortune, return to their own country, of which they seldom lose sight.

THE Europeans are not so well treated at Batavia as the Chinese. None are admitted there as merchants, but the Spaniards. Their ships come from Manilla with gold, which is the produce of that

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island; and cochineal and piafters brought from Mexico. They take in exchange, linens for their own use and that of Acapulco; but the principal article is cinnamon, the consumption of which is much increased by the general use of chocolate in the new world, and the progress it is daily making in Europe. Since the English and French have sailed to the Philippines, the former branch of this trade has considerably declined; the latter suffered a change in the year 1759. Before that time, cinnamon was sold to the Spaniards at a moderate price; but, at present, they are expected to give the same that it bears in Europe. This innovation occasions a coolness between the two colonies. The consequences of this misunderstanding have not come to our knowledge.

ALL we know is, that the French hardly ever go to Batavia but in time of war. They purchase rice and arrack there for the use of their ships and their settlements, and make their payments for these commodities in silver, or bills of exchange.

THE English are oftener seen there. All their vessels coming from Europe to China put in at this harbour under pretence of taking in fresh water; but in reality with a view of vending the goods, which are the property of the ships company, consisting of cloths, hard-ware, glasses, arms, Madeira wines, and Portugal oils. This clandestine trade seldom exceeds a million of livres (43,750l.)

BESIDES the English vessels sent from Europe, there are three or four belonging to the same nation, which are every year fitted out for Batavia from different parts of India. They have attempted to sell opium and linens there, but have been obliged to discontinue this importation, which was too prejudicial to private interest to be permitted. Their trade is limited

ed to the purchase of sugar, which they export to all parts, of and arrack, prodigious quantities of which are consumed in their colonies. Arrack is a kind of brandy made of rice, syrup of sugar, and cocoa-tree, which, after being fermented together, are distilled. This is one among other branches of trade which the Dutch by their industry have deprived the Portuguese of. The art of making arrack, which was originally established at Goa, has for the most part been transferred to Batavia.

ALL imported or exported commodities pay this city a tax of five per cent. The revenue arising from the customs is farmed at the rate of 1,828,000 livres (79,975*l.*) The extent of the trade must not be estimated by this rule, which, however, is always the most to be depended upon. The people in office pay what they think proper, and the company pay nothing, as that would be paying to themselves. Though they are here, as well as in other places, the only merchants in the island, the profits arising from the productions peculiar to Batavia, do not defray the expences of this celebrated mart, which amount to six millions (262,500*l.*)

ONE of the articles of this expence, which is undoubtedly very great, is the maintenance of a council, which gives laws to all the settlements in India, and has the sole direction of affairs. This council is composed of the governor of the Dutch Indies, the director-general, five directors in ordinary, and a small number of extraordinary counsellors, which last have no votes, and only supply the place of the deceased counsellors in ordinary, till successors are appointed.

THE power of nomination to these offices is vested in the direction at home. They are open to all who have money, or are relations or retainers to the governor-general. On his demise, the directors in ordinary provisionally

The manner
of conducting the
affairs of the
Dutch company in
India, and in
Europe.

provisionally appoint a successor who seldom fails to be confirmed in his employment. If the contrary happens, he is not admitted into the council ; but may enjoy all the honours granted to the presidents that retire.

THE governor-general reports to the council the state of all affairs in the island of Java : and each counsellor, that of the province intrusted to his care. The director has the inspection of the chest and magazines at Batavia, which supply the rest of the settlements. All purchases and all sales are directed by him. The signature of the company is indispensably necessary in all commercial transactions.

THOUGH all points ought, strictly speaking, to be decided in the council by a majority of votes, the governor-general seldom fails to exercise an uncontrouled authority. This influence is owing to the care he takes to admit none but persons of inferior abilities, and to the interest they find in making their court to him, in order to advance their fortunes. If on any occasion he meets with an opposition that thwarts his designs, he is at liberty to take his own measures, making himself answerable for the consequences.

THE governor-general, like all the rest of the officers, is appointed only for five years, but usually holds his place during life. There have formerly been instances of governors-general who have retired from business, to pass their days in tranquillity at Batavia ; but the ill treatment experienced from their successors, has, of late years, determined them to remain in their post till death. They formerly appeared in great state, but it was laid aside by governor-general Imhoff, as useless and troublesome. Though all orders of men may aspire to this dignity, none of the army, and but few of the gown, have been known to obtain it. It is
always

always filled by merchants, because the spirit of the company is entirely commercial. Those who are born in India have seldom sufficient address or abilities to procure it. The present president, however, has never been in Europe.

THE salary of this principal officer is but slender; he has no more than two thousand livres (87l. 10s.) a month, and subsistence equal to his pay. The greatest part of his income arises from the liberty allowed him, of taking as much as he pleases from the magazines at prime cost, and from the liberty he assumes of trading to any extent he judges convenient. The income of the counsellors, members of the council, is likewise very considerable, though the company allows them only four hundred livres (17l. 10s.) a month, and goods to the same amount.

THE council meets but twice a week, unless when some extraordinary events require a more strict attendance. They appoint to all civil and military employments in India, except those of the writer and serjeant, which they thought might be left without inconvenience, at the disposal of the governors of the respective settlements. On his advancement to any post, every man is obliged to take an oath, that he has neither promised, nor given any thing to obtain his employment. This custom, which is very ancient, familiarizes people to false oaths, and proves no bar to corruption. Whoever considers the number of absurd and ridiculous oaths necessary to be taken at present in most countries, on being admitted into any society or profession whatever, will be less surprised to find prevarication still prevails where perjury has led the way.

ALL connections of commerce, not excepting that of the Cape of Good Hope, are made by the council, and the result of them always falls under their cognizance.

zance. Even the ships that sail directly from Bengal and Ceylon, only carry to Europe the invoices of their cargoes. Their accompts, as well as all others, are sent to Batavia, where a general register is kept of all affairs.

THE council of India is not a separate body, nor is it independent. It acts in subordination to the direction established in the united provinces. Though this is, in the strict sense of the word, a direction, the care of disposing of the merchandise twice a year, is divided between six chambers concerned in this commerce. Their business is more or less, according to the funds that belong to them.

THE general assembly, which has the direction of the business of the company, is composed of directors of all the chambers. Amsterdam nominates eight; Zealand, four; each of the other chambers, one, and the state but one. Hence we see that Amsterdam, having half the number of voices, has only one to gain to enable it to turn the scale, where every question is to be decided by a majority of votes.

THIS body, which is composed of seventeen persons, meets twice or thrice a year, during six years at Amsterdam, and two at Middleburg. The other chambers are too inconsiderable to enjoy this prerogative. It having been found by experience, that the success frequently depended on secret intrigues, it was proposed, about the middle of the last century to chuse four of the most able of the seventeen deputies, and to invest them with authority to regulate all affairs in Europe and India, without the consent of their colleagues, and without being obliged even to ask their opinion.

IT is true, their mysterious transactions, and the consequences of them, cannot long be kept a secret. The fleet that returns at the end of the summer, brings their books of accounts regularly from India. They
are

are compared with those in Europe. The general balance of the company's accounts are always published in May. Every person concerned knows what he has gained or lost. The gain is commonly considerable.

THE company's fund did not at first exceed 12,919,680 livres (585,236*l.*); Amsterdam furnished 7,349,830 (321,555*l.* 1*s.* 3*d.*); Zealand, 2,667,764 (116,714*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*); Delft, 940,000 (41,125*l.*); Rotterdam, 354,800 (15,522*l.* 10*s.*); Horn, 533,736 (23,350*l.* 19*s.*); Enchuyfen, 1,073,550 (46,967*l.* 16*s.* 3*d.*)

THIS fund was divided into sums of 6,000 livres (262*l.* 10*s.*) which were called shares.

THEIR numbers were two thousand one hundred : since 1692, however, the profits are divided into two thousand one hundred and thirty. It was then that the company, which had always been protected by the house of Orange, and still stood in need of its assistance, made the stadtholder a present of a revenue of thirty shares for life.

THE shares sell for ready money, or upon credit, like merchandise. No other form is requisite than to substitute the name of the buyer for that of the seller in the company's books, the only title by which they are held by the proprietor. Avarice and the spirit of commerce have invented another method of acquiring a share in this traffic. Persons who have no stock to sell, and who do not intend to buy, enter into a reciprocal engagement that one of the parties shall deliver, and the other receive a certain number, at such a time, at a price agreed upon. On the day fixed, they compute the difference between the current price of the stocks and their value when the agreement was made ; they settle the balance of the account in money, and the transaction is over. The desire of gaining, and the fear of losing by these speculations,

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speculations, is productive of great anxiety. They invent good or bad news; they favour or oppose the reports of others; they try to penetrate the secrets of the court, or to purchase those of foreign ministers. These clashing interests have often disturbed the public tranquillity. Matters have even been carried to such a height, that the public have been obliged to take measures to put a stop to the rage of stock-jobbing. The most efficacious method has been to declare all bargains of sale for a time null and void, unless it appears, by the company's books, that the seller was a proprietor at the time the bargain was made. Men of honour hold themselves obliged to fulfil their engagements, notwithstanding this law; but it is natural to think that it must, and indeed it does, make these transactions less frequent.

THE price of stocks, which may be looked upon as the true thermometer of the company, has often varied. Injudicious or unsuccessful treaties, fresh competitions, accidents unavoidably attending an extensive commerce, the tranquillity or the disturbances of India, and of Europe in particular, have occasioned these changes. For some years the standing price of stocks has been two hundred and forty per cent. more than their original value. They formerly rose as high as six hundred and fifty per cent. So considerable an advantage must have greatly enriched the original proprietors of these funds, and the families that inherit them; but the present purchasers seldom get more than three and a half per cent. interest for their money. This remarkable prosperity has no parallel in history. Let us try to explain the causes of it.

Causes of
the prosper-
ity of the
company.

THE earliest success of the company was owing to their having the good fortune, in less than half a century, to take more than three hundred Portu-
guese

guese vessels. These ships, some of which were bound for Europe, and others for different sea ports in India, were laden with the spoils of Asia. This wealth, which the captors had the honesty not to meddle with, brought to the company immense returns, or served to procure them. Thus the sales were very considerable, though the exports were very moderate.

THE decline of the maritime power of the Portuguese, encouraged the Dutch to attack the settlements belonging to that nation, and greatly facilitated the conquest of them. They found the forts strongly built, defended by a numerous artillery, and provided with every thing that government and the rich individuals of a victorious nation might naturally be supposed to have collected together for their protection. To form a just idea of this advantage, we need only consider what it has cost other nations to obtain permission to fix in an advantageous situation, to build houses, magazines, and forts; and to procure all the conveniences necessary for their security, or their commerce.

WHEN the company found themselves in possession of so many rich and well established settlements, they did not give way to a grasping ambition. They were desirous of extending their commerce, not their conquests. They can hardly be accused of any instances of injustice, except those that seemed necessary to secure their power. The east was no longer a scene of bloodshed, as it had been at the time, when the desire of distinguishing themselves by martial exploits, and the rage of making proselytes, gave the Portuguese a menacing air wherever they appeared in India.

THE Dutch seemed to have arrived rather to revenge, and rescue the natives of the country, than to enslave them. They maintained no wars with them,
but

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but such as were necessary to procure settlements upon their coasts, and to oblige them to enter into treaties of commerce. It is true, these people received no advantage from them, and were deprived of a great part of their liberty; but in other respects, their new masters, rather less barbarous than the conquerors they dispossessed, left the Indians at liberty to govern themselves, and did not compel them to change their laws, their manners, or their religion.

By their manner of posting and distributing their forces, they contrived to keep the people in awe, whom they had at first conciliated by their behaviour. If we except Cochin and Malacca, they had nothing upon the continent but factories and small forts. The islands of Java and Ceylon contained their troops and magazines: and from thence their ships maintained their authority, and protected their trade throughout India.

THIS trade became very considerable by the spices falling into their hands, after the destruction of the Portuguese settlements. The demand for this valuable article has been more or less extensive, according to circumstances. At present they sell every year a hundred and fifty thousand pounds of cloves in India, and three hundred and fifty thousand in Europe: the price in both parts of the world is fixed at ten livres (8s. 9d.) a pound. Though the Dutch give no more than eight sols and a few deniers (about 8d. $\frac{1}{2}$ or 9d.) a pound, it costs them four livres six sols (about 3s. 9d.) on account of charges and deficiencies. India takes off no more than a hundred thousand weight of nutmegs, whereas Europe consumes two hundred and fifty thousand. It is bought at the rate of two sols three deniers (about 1d. $\frac{1}{8}$) a pound, and the necessary expences bring it two livres ten sols (2s. 2d. $\frac{1}{4}$.) It sells for seven livres ten sols (6s. 6d. $\frac{1}{4}$)

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on this side the Cape, and for no more than five livres twelve sols (4s. 10d. $\frac{3}{4}$) on the other side. This difference will never induce any merchant to bring us the nutmeg; because the nuts that are sent all over Asia are shrivelled, have no oil in them, and often decay. Ten thousand pounds of mace is sufficient for the supply of India, a hundred thousand for that of Europe. The prime cost is sixteen sols six deniers (about 8d. $\frac{3}{4}$) a pound, it rises to five livres eight sols (about 4s. 8d. $\frac{1}{2}$) and is sold every where at twelve livres sixteen sols (about 11s. 2d. $\frac{1}{4}$.) As for the cinnamon, the consumption of it in Europe does not exceed four hundred thousand weight, and in India it does not amount to two hundred thousand: the greatest part of which is sent to Manilla for the use of Spanish America. It is every where sold by the company at present, at the rate of ten livres ten sols (about 9s. 2d. $\frac{1}{4}$) a pound, though it does not cost them twelve sols (about 6d. $\frac{1}{4}$.) That which they refuse to purchase, as being too coarse, is made into oil. They make presents of it to the powers of Asia who do not chuse to purchase it; and it sells here from about twenty to fifty or sixty livres (17s. 6d. to 2l. 12s. 6d.) an ounce. The smell is so strong, and at the same time so agreeable, that it would be commonly, if not universally used, if the Dutch did not ask so high a price for it: it being more for their advantage to sell this spice in its original form.

WE cannot conclude this important article without observing, that in proportion as the company's profits have decreased, they have raised the price of spices both in India and Europe. This, though in itself a bad expedient, has not injured in any great degree the sale of cloves and nutmeg, for which there is no succedaneum. But the case has been otherwise
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in regard to cinnamon. A spurious kind has, in several markets, been substituted for the genuine; and this branch of commerce is visibly on the decline, and will continue to be more so every day.

THE company have spared no pains to preserve the exclusive trade of pepper, which they held for some time. Though their attempts have not been quite successful, they have so far gained their point, as to maintain a considerable superiority over their competitors. The quantity they sell of this article in Europe amounts to five millions weight, and three millions five hundred weight in India. The company purchase it, upon the whole at thirty-six livres (11. 11s. 6d.) a hundred weight, and sell it to us at a hundred livres (41. 7s. 6d.) and from forty-eight to seventy-two livres (about 21. 12s. 6d. on an average) to the people of Asia.

IN consequence of the sale of spices, the greatest part of the India trade must of course fall into the hands of the Dutch. The necessity of exporting them, gave the Dutch an opportunity of appropriating to themselves several other branches of commerce. In process of time they became masters of the coasting trade of Asia, as they were already of that of Europe. This navigation employed a great number of ships and sailors, who without causing any expence to the company contributed to its security.

By virtue of these superior advantages, they were enabled, for a long time, to prevent the attempts of other nations to interfere in the Indian trade, or to make them abortive. The produce of this rich country came to the Europeans through the hands of the Dutch; who never experienced those restraints from their country, which have in later times been imposed every where else. The government, convinced that the proceedings of other nations neither
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ought, nor could be a rule to direct theirs, always gave the company leave to dispose of their merchandise at the capital freely, and without reserve. At the time this society was instituted, the United Provinces had neither any manufactures nor crude materials to work upon. It was, therefore, no inconvenience, but rather a point of great policy, to allow, and even encourage, the citizens to wear linens and stuffs imported from India. The various manufactures which were introduced into the republic, in consequence of the repeal of the edict of Nantz, might have induced them to lay aside the thoughts of purchasing their cloathing from so remote a country; but the fondness that prevailed in Europe at that time for French fashions, had given so advantageous an opening for the manufactures of the refugees, that they had not the least idea of departing from the ancient channel. Since the high price of labour, the necessary consequence of a redundancy of money, has lessened the manufactures, and obliged the nation to trade upon a frugal plan, India stuffs have had a greater run than ever. It was thought that fewer inconveniences would arise from enriching the Indians than the English or French, whose prosperity would not fail to hasten the ruin of a state, the opulence of which is only supported by the rashness, the disputes, or indolence of other powers.

THIS wise conduct has retarded the decline of the company; but the change is at last effected, notwithstanding the flattering illusions of an imaginary prosperity. A detail of facts will set this truth in a clear light.

WE have seen that the original fund of the company, which has never been since augmented, was no more than 12,919,680 livres (565,236l.) With this slender capital, they attacked the Spaniards and

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and Portuguese in the Indian seas, gained conquests over these, then warlike nations, and over the people of Asia, whose numbers, at least rendered them formidable; they formed magazines, built cities, and erected forts without number; and established or supported their commerce by force of arms. These amazing expences lasted from the first institution of the company till the year 1665, the æra when all their acquisitions were made, all their settlements formed. During this long and restless period, the annual returns amounted to twenty and three-fourths per cent.

THE company had afterwards no occasion to send one fleet after another into the east, to assert the dominion of those seas, to raise new armies to subdue or awe their enemies, or to lavish their blood and treasure in securing their possessions. Their operations were only those of a brisk and advantageous commerce; and, consequently, their dividend, till the year 1728 increased to about three and twenty per cent. It has since that time gradually fallen to twenty, fifteen, and even lower. A further reduction will in all probability take place, and we shall now state the reasons upon which this conjecture is founded.

IT is demonstrated, that at the closing of the books in 1751, the capital of the company in India did not amount to more than 71,000,000 livres (3,106,250*l.*) the fleet that was on its way to Europe stood them in 19,200,000 (840,000*l.*) and the vessels fitted out for India in 3,000,000 of livres (131,250*l.*) They had a debt of 14,000,000 of livres (612,500*l.*) in India, and were 22,400,000 livres (980,000*l.*) in arrears in Europe. Consequently the stock of the company, exclusive of their fortifications, did not exceed 56,800,000 livres (2,485,000*l.*)

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OF this sum, inconsiderable as it was, there were only 23,400,000 livres (1,023,750*l.*) in commercial effects; that is to say, ready money, merchandise, and good debts. The remainder consisted of bad debts to the amount of 3,000,000 (131,250*l.*) and of doubtful ones to the amount of 6,600,000 livres (288,750*l.*); 8,000,000 livres (350,000*l.*) allotted for provision for the table; 1,400,000 (61,250*l.*) for brass cannon; for iron ordnance, bullets, and balls, 500,000 (21,875*l.*); for muskets and ammunition 1,800,000 (78,700*l.*); for plate 200,000 (8,750*l.*); for slaves 300,000 (13,125*l.*); for cattle and horses 200,000 (8,750*l.*); and for goods entered from different parts of India for Batavia 11,200,000 livres (490,000*l.*)

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IT remains to examine what profits the company have been able to make with so weak a capital. Their gains, as far as it is possible to compute them, annually amount to 25,400,000 livres (1,111,250*l.*); but their ordinary expences amount to 18,600,000 (813,750*l.*) and their dividend, supposing it to be twenty-five per cent. to 3,330,000 (145,687*l.* 10*s.*); consequently they have only 470,000 livres (20,562*l.* 10*s.*) remaining, to defray the expences of war, the loss of their magazines by fire, or their vessels by sea, and all that train of evils which human prudence can neither foresee nor prevent.

THIS state of the matter must appear to those who see things at a distance to have so little probability, that we should not have ventured to warrant the truth of it, if we had not before us governor-general Mofel's correspondence with the direction. This discerning and able administrator considers the company as an exhausted body that is sustained by cordials: it is, as he expresses himself, a leaky vessel, that is kept from foundering only by the pump.

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THIS deplorable situation, which will reduce the company to the necessity of borrowing money upon their capital, or of lessening their dividend still more if any new misfortune should happen, must have had its causes, and those too very considerable. The most obvious of all is the multitude of petty wars which have followed each other without interruption.

THE inhabitants of the Moluccas had scarce recovered from the astonishment into which they had been thrown by the victories gained by the Dutch over a people whom they looked upon as invincible, when they grew impatient of the yoke. The company, dreading the consequences of this discontent, made war upon the king of Ternate, to oblige him to consent to the extirpation of the clove-tree every where except in Amboyna. The islanders in Banda were utterly exterminated, because they refused to become their slaves. Macassar, in order to support their interests, kept up a considerable force for a long time. The loss of Formosa brought on the ruin of the factories of Tonkin and Siam. They were obliged to take up arms to support the exclusive trade of Sumatra. Malacca was besieged, its territory ravaged, and its navigation interrupted by pirates. Negapatan was twice attacked; Cochin was engaged in resisting the attempts of the kings of Calicut and Travancor; Ceylon has been a scene of perpetual disturbances; which are full as frequent, and still more violent at Java, where peace can never continue long, unless the company will give a reasonable price for the commodities they require. They have engaged in bloody contests with an European nation, whose power in India increases every day, and whose character is not that of moderation. All these wars have proved ruinous, more ruinous indeed, than might have been expected, because those who had the management of them

them only sought opportunity of enriching themselves.

THESE notorious dissensions have in many places been followed by odious oppressions; which have been practised at Japan, China, Cambodia, Arracan, on the banks of the Ganges, at Achem, Coromandel, Surat in Persia, at Bassora, Mocho, and other places. Most of the countries in India are filled with tyrants who prefer piracy to commerce, who acknowledge no right but that of power, and think that whatever is practicable, is just.

THE profits accruing to the company from the places where their trade met with no interruption, for a long time counterbalanced the losses they sustained in others by tyranny or anarchy; but other European nations deprived them of this indemnification. This competition obliged them to buy dearer, and to sell cheaper. Their natural advantages might, perhaps, have enabled them to support this misfortune, if their rivals had not determined to throw the trade carried on from India to India into the hands of private merchants. By this expression we are to understand the operations necessary to transport the merchandise of one country in Asia to another; from China, Bengal, and Surat, for instance, to the Philippines, Persia, and Arabia. By means of this circulation, and by a multiplicity of exchanges, the Dutch obtained for nothing, or for a trifle, the rich cargoes they brought to Europe. The activity, œconomy and skill of the free merchants drove the company from all the sea-ports where equal favour was shewn. Their flag was seldom seen in the roads where eight or ten English vessels appeared.

THIS revolution, which so clearly pointed out to them what steps they had to take, did not set them right with respect to a measure that was destructive to

trade. They had been accustomed to carry all their Indian and European merchandize to Batavia, from whence it was distributed among the different factories who sold it to advantage. This custom occasioned expence and loss of time, the inconveniences of which were not perceived while their profits were so enormous. When other nations carried on a direct trade, it became indispensably necessary to relinquish a system, not only bad in itself, but incompatible with circumstances. The dominion of custom, however, still prevails; and it was said to be owing to the company's apprehensions that their servants would make an ill use of any innovation, that they did not adopt a measure, the necessity of which was so fully demonstrated.

THIS motive was probably nothing more than a pretext which served as a cover to private interest. The frauds of the commissaries were more than winked at. The chief of them had for the most part been exact in their conduct. They were under the direction of admirals who visited all the factories, were invested with absolute powers in India, and, at the conclusion of every voyage, gave an account in Europe of their administration. In proportion as the government became less active, the agents, who were not so strictly watched, grew more remiss. They abandoned themselves to effeminacy, a habit of which is easily contracted in hot countries. It became necessary to increase the number of these agents: and no one made a capital point of correcting an abuse, which gave the people in power an opportunity of providing for their dependents. They went to Asia with a view of making a considerable fortune in a short time. Being prohibited from trading, their appointments not being sufficient to maintain them, and all honest ways of enriching themselves being shut against them, they had recourse

recourse to mal-practices. The company were cheated in all their affairs by factors who had no interest in their prosperity. These disorders grew to such a height, that it was proposed to allow a premium of five per cent. upon all commodities sold or bought, which was to be divided among all the servants according to their ranks. Upon these terms they were obliged to take an oath that their account was just. This arrangement lasted but five years; it being found that corruption prevailed as much as ever: the premium and the oath were abolished; and from this period the agents ask any consideration for their trouble that their avarice dictates.

THE contagion, which at first infected the lower factories, gradually reached the principal settlements, and, at last, Batavia itself. So great a simplicity of manners prevailed there at first, that the members of the government usually dressed like common sailors, and never wore decent cloaths but in their council-chamber. This modesty was accompanied with so distinguished a probity, that before the year 1650, not one remarkable fortune had been made; but this unheard-of prodigy of virtue could not be of long duration. We have seen warlike republics conquer and make acquisitions for their country, and fill the public treasury with the spoils of kingdoms. But we shall never see the citizens of a commercial republic amass riches for a particular body in the state, from which they derive neither glory nor profit. The austerity of republican principles must of course give place to the example of the people of the east. This relaxation of manners was more sensibly perceived in the capital of the colony, where the articles of luxury that came from all parts, and the air of magnificence it was thought necessary to throw round the administration, introduced a taste for shew. This taste occasioned a corruption of manners; and this corruption

ruption of manners made all methods of getting money alike indifferent. Even the appearance of decency was so far disregarded, that a governor-general finding himself convicted of plundering the finances without mercy, made no scruple of justifying his conduct by shewing a *carte blanche* signed by the company.

How could the conduct of the governors be remedied when their depravation could not be foreseen in the infancy of the republic, where a purity of manners and frugality prevailed? In these settlements of the Dutch, the laws had been made for virtuous men; other manners required other laws.

THESE disorders might have been repressed in their first beginnings, if they had not naturally made the same progress in Europe as in Asia. But as a river that overflows its banks collects more mud than water in its passage, so the vices which riches bring along with them, increase faster than riches themselves. The post of director, which was at first allotted to able merchants, was, at length, vested in great families, where it is held with the magistracies, by virtue of which it was first procured. These families, engaged in political views, or in the service of administration, considered these posts, which they had ravished from the company, only in the light of a considerable income, or an easy provision for their relations; some of them even as opportunities of making a bad use of their credit. The business of receiving accounts, hearing debates and carrying on the most important transactions of the company, was left to a secretary, who, under the plausible title of advocate, became the sole manager of all the affairs. The governors, who met but twice a-year, in the spring and autumn, at the arrival and departure of the fleets, forgot the habit and track of all business which requires a constant attention. They were obliged repose

an entire confidence in a person appointed by the state to make extracts from all the dispatches that arrived from India, and to draw up the form of the answers that were to be returned. This guide, who was sometimes incapable, often bribed, and always suspicious, frequently led those whom he conducted to the brink of a precipice where he left them to fall.

THE spirit of commerce arises from interest, and interest always occasions disputes. Each chamber wanted to have docks, arsenals, and magazines, for the ships it was to fit out. Offices were multiplied, and frauds were encouraged by so wrong a proceeding.

It was a maxim in every department to furnish goods, as it had a right to do, in proportion to the number of its ships. These goods were not alike proper for the places for which they were destined, and were either not sold at all, or sold to disadvantage.

WHEN circumstances called for extraordinary supplies, a spirit of puerile vanity, which is afraid of betraying its weakness by confessing its wants, led them to avoid borrowing money in Holland, where they would have paid only an interest of three per cent. and to have recourse to Batavia, where money was at six, or more frequently to Bengal, or the coast of Coromandel, where it was at nine per cent. and sometimes much higher. Abuses were multiplied on all sides.

THE states-general, whose business it was to examine, every three years into the state of the company; to satisfy themselves that they kept within the limits assigned by their grant; to see that justice was administered to the persons concerned; and that the trade was carried on in a manner that was not prejudicial to the republic; should have put a stop to these irregularities, and ought to have done it. Whatever their reasons might be, this was never accomplished.

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In consequence of this behaviour, they had the mortification to see the proprietors unite in conferring upon the last stadtholder the supreme direction of their affairs in Europe and India; without being aware of the danger that might result from the influence that a perpetual president of the state must have over a rich and powerful body. Notwithstanding this, the dividend is at this time larger, and the price of stocks higher. A certain premature death has drawn a veil over the plan of reformation that had been concerted. Necessity will oblige them to resume it, with such wise precautions, no doubt, as may prevent the abuse of that power, against which they think themselves bound to protest.

THE first step must be, to convince themselves that the government of the company is too complicated even in Europe. A direction vested in so many chambers, and in such a number of directors, must be attended with infinite inconveniences. It is impossible that the same spirit should operate every where alike, and that the transactions should be carried on without receiving a tincture from the opposite views of the persons who conduct them in different places, without concert or connection. Unity of design, so necessary in the fine arts, is equally advantageous in business. It will be in vain objected, that it is the interest of all democratical states to divide their wealth, and to make the estates of the citizens as equal as possible. This maxim, in itself true, is not applicable to a republic that has no territory, and maintains itself merely by its commerce. It will therefore be expedient that every article bought or sold should fall under one general inspection, and be brought into one port. The savings that would be made, would be the least advantage the company would receive from this alteration.

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FROM this place, which would be the center of intelligence from all quarters, deputations might be sent to enquire into, and correct abuses in the remotest parts of Asia. The conduct of the Dutch towards the Indian princes, from whom they have forcibly extorted an exclusive commerce, will be one of the first objects of their consideration. They have, for a long time, behaved towards them with an insolent pride; have attempted to learn the secrets of their government; and to engage them in quarrels with their neighbours; they have fomented divisions among their subjects, and shewn a distrust mixed with animosity; they have obliged them to make sacrifices which they never promised; and deprived them of advantages secured to them by the terms of capitulation. All these intolerable acts of tyranny, occasion frequent disturbances, which sometimes end in hostilities. To restore harmony, which is a task that grows more necessary and more difficult every day, agents should be appointed, who to a spirit of moderation join a knowledge of the interests, customs, language, religion, and manners of these nations. At present, perhaps, the company may be unprovided with persons of this character: but it concerns them to procure them. Perhaps too they might find them among the superintendents of their factories, which they have every reason to induce them to abandon.

THE discerning part of the merchants of all nations unanimously agree, that the Dutch settlements in India are too numerous: and that by lessening their number, they would greatly reduce their expences, without confining their commerce. The company cannot possibly be ignorant of what is so generally known. One would be apt to think, they were induced to continue the factories that were chargeable to them, to prevent a suspicion that they were not in a condition

condition to maintain them. But this weak consideration should sway them no longer. All that deserves their attention, is to make a due distinction between what it is convenient to part with, and advantageous to retain. They have before them a series of facts and experiments, which must prevent any mistake in an arrangement of such importance.

IN the subordinate factories, which they may think proper to continue for the advantage of trade, they will demolish all useless fortifications; they will dissolve the councils established from motives of ostentation rather than necessity; and they will proportion the number of their servants to the extent of their business. Let the company call to mind those happy times, when two or three factors chosen with judgment, sent out cargoes infinitely more considerable than any they have received since; when they raised amazing profits upon their goods, which, in process of time, have been diverted into the pockets of their numerous agents; and then they will not hesitate a moment to return to their old maxims, and to prefer a simplicity which made them rich, to an empty parade that ruins them. These disorders were owing to their own misconduct. The Europeans, settled in their colonies lived in disgrace if they were not engaged in their service. Every expedient was tried to extricate themselves from a state of humiliation which it was impossible to endure. The superintendents suffered themselves to be corrupted; and employments were multiplied without necessity and without measure. Let them discountenance a prejudice, which in whatever light it is viewed, is unjust and pernicious; and the reformation we are pointing out will easily be accomplished.

It will be attended with greater difficulties in the large colonies. The company's agents there are a more numerous, reputable, and in proportion a more opulent

opulent body, and consequently less disposed to submit to any regulations. It is, however, necessary to reduce them to order, since the abuses they have either introduced, or winked at, must sooner or later inevitably bring on the ruin of the interests over which they preside. The mismanagement that prevails in the manufactories, magazines, docks, and arsenals at Batavia, and other large settlements, is scarcely to be paralleled. The mal-practices of the superintendents and subordinate officers are so notorious, that according to the most favourable representations, at least two-thirds might be saved if the buildings, works and repairs were executed by contract.

THESE arrangements would lead to others still more considerable. At their first rise, the company established fixed and precise rules, which were not to be departed from on any pretence, or on any occasion whatsoever. Their servants were mere machines, the smallest movements of which were wound up before-hand. They judged this absolute and universal direction necessary to correct what was amiss in the choice of their agents, who were most of them drawn out of obscurity, and had not the advantage of that careful education which would have enlarged their ideas. The company themselves did not suffer the least variation in their own conduct, and to this invariable uniformity they attributed the success of their enterprizes. The frequent misfortunes, which this system occasioned, did not prevail with them to lay it aside; and they always adhered obstinately to their first plan. In this they were not guided by reflection, but followed a blind impulse. At this time of the day, when they can no longer commit errors with impunity, it is necessary they should make some alterations. Tired of maintaining a disadvantageous struggle with the free traders of other nations, they should resolve to
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leave the commerce from one part of India to another to private persons. This happy innovation would make their colonies richer and more powerful. They themselves would reap more advantage from the customs that would be paid in their factories, than they receive from the faint efforts of an expiring commerce. Every thing, even the ships that are too old to be sent to Europe, would turn to account. The navigators in these settlements would be glad to make use of them in those calm seas.

PERHAPS the company might carry the plan of reformation still further. Would it not be a proper scheme to resign the trade of linens exported to Europe to individuals? Those who are acquainted with their transactions, know very well that they gain no more than thirty per cent. by this article, which is always sold to them at a dear rate by their agents, though it is bought with their own money. If we deduct from this profit, the averages, the interest of advance-money, the salaries of the commissaries, and the hazards at sea, the remainder will be very trifling. Would not twenty per cent. freight, which the free merchants would readily give, be of greater advantage to the company?

THEY would then be released from the cares and restraints of their present commerce, and the port of Batavia would be open to all nations, who would load their ships with the merchandise of Europe; with the goods bought by the company, at a low price, of the India princes, with whom they carry on an exclusive trade; and with the spices destined for all the sea-ports in Asia, where the consumption would necessarily increase. The sacrifice they would make to the general freedom of trade, would be amply rewarded by the certain, easy and advantageous sale of spices in Europe. The progress of corruption would be stopt
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by adhering to so plain a rule of administration ; and order would be established on such firm grounds, that it would require but little care to preserve it.

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THE necessity of making the internal arrangements we propose, is so much the more urgent, as the company are in imminent danger of losing the constituent part of their power, and of having their spice trade taken from them.

It is confidently reported, that the clove-tree is no longer to be found any where but at Amboyna ; but this is a mistake. Before the Dutch got possession of the Moluccas, properly so called, all the islands in this archipelago were covered with these trees : they ordered them to be pulled up, and continue to send two sloops, each having twelve soldiers on board, with orders to destroy them wherever they make their appearance. But not to lay any stress here upon the baseness of such avarice, which counteracts the bounty of nature, these extirpators, with all their industry, can only execute their commission upon the coast. Were three hundred men to be continually employed in traversing the forests, they would not be able fully to answer the intention of their employers. The earth rebels against this devastation, and seems to resist the wickedness of men. The clove springs up under the instrument that destroys it, and mocks the unfeeling industry of the Dutch, who wish to see nothing grow but for themselves. The English that are settled at Sumatra have, for some years, sent cloves to their mother-country, which they obtain from the inhabitants of Bali, who gather them in places where, it is pretended, they no longer exist.

It is equally a mistake that the nutmeg-tree is confined to Banda : it grows in New Guinea, and in the islands that lie near that coast. The Malays, the only people who held any correspondence with these fierce nations,

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nations, have carried the produce of this tree to Batavia; the precautions that have been taken to conceal the knowledge of this fact have only served the more fully to confirm it; and its truth is supported by so many attestations, that it is impossible to entertain a doubt of it.

IF, however, the certainty of these facts should be called in question; if either habit or tradition should make it believed that the Spaniards settled at the Philippine islands could not, with great advantage to themselves, easily procure the clove and nutmeg-tree; it must on all hands be acknowledged, that, in these remote seas, an event has happened, which merits a serious attention. The strait of Lombok has been discovered by the English: in consequence of this discovery, they have penetrated as far as Saffara, which lies between New Guinea and the Molucca islands. This island is found to be in the same latitude, to have the same soil, and the same climate, with those that produce the spices, and they have formed a settlement upon it. Is it credible that this active and persevering nation will lose sight of the only object they can propose to themselves from this situation? or that they will be discouraged by the obstacles they may meet with? Could we suppose the company so little acquainted with the character of their rivals, their situation would no longer be doubtful; it would be desperate.

SETTING aside this contest between trading interests, the Dutch have reason to be apprehensive of one of a slower and more destructive kind. All circumstances, particularly their manner of conducting their forces both by sea and land, conspire to invite their enemies to attack them.

THE company have a fleet of about a hundred ships, from six hundred to a thousand tons burthen. Twenty-eight or thirty are annually sent out from Europe, and

and a smaller number returns. Those that are not in a condition to return, make voyages in India, where the seas, except those in the neighbourhood of Japan, are so calm, that weaker vessels may sail in them with safety. In times of profound peace the ships, sail separately, but on their return they always form two fleets at the Cape, which pass by the Orcaades, where two ships belonging to the Republic wait to convoy them to Holland. In time of war this detour was contrived to avoid the enemy's privateers; and they continue to make use of it in time of peace, to prevent contraband trade. It was found difficult to procure sailors who would encounter the cold blasts of the north, after being used to hot climates; but this difficulty was surmounted, by offering two months pay extraordinary. This custom has been continued even when contrary winds and storms drove the fleets into the channel. The chamber of Amsterdam attempted but once to suppress it; but they were in danger of being burnt by the populace, who, like the rest of the nation, disapproved of the arbitrary proceedings of the company, and lamented their exclusive privilege. The company's navy is commanded by officers who were originally sailors or cabin-boys; they are qualified for pilots, and for working a ship, but they have not the least notion of naval evolutions; not to mention, that from the defects of their education they can have no idea of the love of glory, or of inculcating it into that class of men who are under their command.

THEIR conduct is still worse with regard to their land forces. Soldiers who have deserted from every nation in Europe may, indeed, be expected not to want courage; but their provision and cloathing is so bad, and they are so much harassed, that they have an aversion for the service. The officers, who, for the most part originally belonged to some low profession, in which they
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got a sum sufficient to purchase their posts, are incapable of infusing into them a military spirit. The contempt in which a people purely commercial hold those whose situation dooms them to involuntary poverty, together with their aversion for war, contributes greatly to degrade and dispirit them. To these several causes of their inactivity, weakness, and want of discipline, may be subjoined another, which is equally applicable both to the land and sea service.

THERE is not, perhaps, in the most slavish governments so dishonourable and iniquitous a mode of raising seamen and soldiers, as that which has, for a long time, been practised by the company. Their agents, called by the people *vendeurs d'ames* (kidnappers), who are always busy in the territories, and even beyond the boundaries of the republic, make it their employment to entice credulous men to embark for India, in hopes of making a considerable fortune in a short time. Those who are allured by the bait are enrolled, and receive two months pay, which is always given to their betrayer. They enter into an engagement of three hundred livres, (13l. 2s. 6d.) which is the profit of the person that enlists them, who is obliged by this agreement to furnish them with some clothes worth about a tenth part of that sum. The debt is secured by one of the company's bills, but it is never paid unless the debtor lives long enough to discharge it out of his pay.

A COMPANY which supports itself, notwithstanding this contempt for the military order, and with soldiers so corrupted, should enable us to determine the progress which the arts of negotiation have made in these latter ages. It has ever been necessary to supply the want of strength by treaties, by patience, by moderation and by artifice; but republicans should be well informed, that such a state can only be a precarious one, and that political measures, how well soever they may

may be combined, are not always able to resist the torrent of violence and the necessity of circumstances. The company should have troops composed of citizens, which is by no means impossible. It never can inspire that public spirit, that enthusiasm for glory which it has not itself. In this respect it is the same with a company as with a government, which ought to form its troops upon those principles only that are the basis of its own constitution. Oeconomy and the desire of gain are the principles of administration adopted by the company. These are the motives that should attach the soldier to their service. As he is engaged in commercial expeditions, he should be assured of a reward proportioned to the means he hath exerted in forwarding their success, and his pay should be made out to him in stock. Then personal interests, far from weakening the general intentions, will only serve to strengthen them.

If these reflections should not prevail upon the company to alter this important part of their administration, let them at least be awakened by the prospect of the dangers that threaten them. If they were attacked in India, they would be deprived of their settlements there in less time than they have employed in wresting them from the Portuguese. Their best towns have neither covert ways nor glacis, nor out-works, and would not hold out a week. They are never stocked with provisions, though they are always filled with warlike stores. There are not more than ten thousand men, whites and blacks, to defend them, and there should be double that number. These disadvantages would not be compensated by the resources of the navy. The company has not a single vessel of the line in all its ports, and it would be impossible to arm the merchantmen as ships of war. The largest of those that return to Europe have not one hundred

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men; and if the men dispersed in all the ships that sail to India were collected, there would not be a sufficient number to form one single ship's crew. Any man accustomed to calculate probable events would not scruple to say, that the power of the Dutch might be annihilated in Asia, before the state could come to the assistance of the company. The only basis upon which this apparently gigantic Colossus is fixed, is the Molucca islands. Six men of war and fifteen hundred land forces would be more than sufficient to secure the conquest of them, which might be effected either by the French or the English.

If the French should form this enterprize, their squadron might sail from the isle of France, and bear down upon Ternate, where a commencement of hostilities would give the first intelligence of its arrival in those seas. A fort without outworks, and which might be battered from the ships, would not make much resistance. Amboyna, which formerly had a rampart, a bad ditch, and four small bastions, has been so frequently subverted by earthquakes, that it cannot be in a condition to put a stop to an enterprising enemy for two days. Banda has its peculiar difficulties. There is no bottom round these islands, and there are such violent currents, that if two or three channels which lead up to it were missed, the vessels would be unavoidably carried away under the wind. But this might be easily prevented by the pilots of Amboyna. There is nothing more to attack than a wall without a ditch, or a covert way defended only by four bastions in bad condition. A small fort erected upon an eminence that commands the place, could not defend itself four and twenty hours.

ALL those who have seen the Moluccas, and examined them attentively, agree, that they would not hold out one month against the forces we have mentioned.

oned. If, as it is probable, the garrisons, which are not half so numerous as they ought to be, and exasperated with the manner in which they are treated, should refuse to fight, or should make but a feeble resistance, the conquest would be more rapid. To secure it as firmly as it deserves, it would be necessary to take possession of Batavia; a circumstance not so difficult as it may seem to be. The squadron, with the soldiers that were not left in garrison, and as many of the Dutch troops as should have joined the conqueror, with a timely reinforcement of eight or nine hundred men, would infallibly accomplish this enterprise, of which we shall be convinced if we have a just idea of Batavia.

THE most common obstacle to the besieging of maritime places is the difficulty of landing; which is by no means the case at the capital of Java. Governor-general Imhoff, who was apprized of this circumstance, attempted in vain to remedy it, by constructing a fort at the mouth of the river which embellishes the city. If these works, erected at a great expence by persons of no skill, had even been brought to perfection, they would not have improved the situation much: the landing, which would have been made impracticable in one place, would always have been open by means of several rivers that empty themselves into the road, and are all navigable by sloops.

THE troops being once formed upon land would find nothing but an immense city without a covert way, defended by a rampart, and by some low and irregular bastions, surrounded by a ditch formed on one side by a river, and on the other by some marshy canals, which might easily be filled with running water; it was formerly defended by a citadel; but Imhoff, by building between the city and this fortress some extensive and high barracks, intercepted the communication. He was afterwards told of this blun-

der, and could think of no better way of rectifying it, than to demolish two half bastions of the fortress, looking towards the city. Since that time they have been joined to each other.

BUT if the fortifications were as perfect as they are bad ; if the artillery, which is immense, were directed by men of judgment ; if even Cohorn or Vauban were substituted in the room of those unskilful persons, who have now the charge of their works, the place could not hold out. It would require at least four thousand men to defend it, and there are seldom more than six hundred. Neither indeed are the Dutch so ignorant as to place their confidence in so feeble a garrison : they depend much more upon the inundations they are able to raise by opening the sluices that confine several small rivers. They imagine that these inundations would retard the operations of the siege, and would destroy the besiegers by the distempers they would occasion. With a little more reflection they would discover, that the place must surrender, before these drainings had taken effect.

THE plan of conquest that France might form, would equally suit the interest of Great Britain ; with this difference, that the English would in the first place make themselves masters of the Cape of Good Hope, an excellent harbour, which they are in want of for their voyages to India:

THE Cape may be attacked in two places: the first is Table Bay, at the extremity of which the fort is situated. It is an open road, where the violence of the sea is broken only by a small island, and is so bad in the months of June, July, August, and September, that in 1722 twenty-five ships were lost there, and seven in 1736. Though all navigators prefer it in the others seasons of the year, on account of the accommodations they find there, it is probable that a landing

landing would not be attempted here, because the two sides of the harbour are covered with batteries, which it would be hazardous, and, perhaps, impossible to silence. False Bay would undoubtedly be preferable, which though at thirty leagues distance from the former by sea, is yet no more than three leagues from the capital on the land side. The landing would be effected quietly in this place of security, and the troops would gain, without opposition, an eminence which commands the fort. As this citadel, in other respects confined is only defended by a garrison of three or four hundred men at most, it might be reduced in less than a day's time by a few bombs. The inhabitants of the colony dispersed throughout an immense space, and separated from each other by deserts, would not have time to come to its relief. Perhaps, they would not if it were even in their power. We may be allowed to suppose that the oppression under which they groan, may make them wish for a change of government. The loss of the Cape would, perhaps, render it impossible for the company to convey to India the succours necessary for the defence of their settlements, or would at least make those succours less certain and more expensive. The English on the contrary, would draw great conveniences, and even immense advantages from this conquest, if the spirit of monopoly, which reason and humanity will always oppose, could once be laid aside.

THE British colonies of North America have iron, wood, rice, sugar, and various other articles of consumption, which the Cape is entirely without. They might be conveyed thither, and wines and brandy received in exchange. The soil and climate of this part of Africa are so favourable to the cultivation of the vine, that an immense extent of land may be allotted to it. If a regular consumption could be established, we should soon see a space of two hundred leagues covered

vered with vineyards. Toleration, and the mildness of the government; the prospect of a comfortable situation would attract cultivators from all quarters. They would soon be in a condition to furnish wholesome and agreeable liquors in plenty to British America, and, perhaps, the metropolis itself might one day be supplied from the same plentiful source with wine, which it enwillingly purchases from France.

If the republic of Holland should not consider as imaginary the dangers to which our love of the general good of nations makes us apprehend her commerce may be exposed, she ought to omit no precaution to prevent them. She must constantly keep in mind, that the company, from its beginning to the year 1722, has received about fifteen hundred ships, the freight of which amounted in India to 703,366,000 livres (30,772,262*l.* 10*s.*) and has been sold in Europe for double that sum: that by sending 6,000,000 of livres (262,500*l.*) into India, annual returns of 40,000,000 (1,750,000*l.*) are procured, only the fifth part of which at most is consumed in the united provinces; that at the renewal of each grant, the company has given considerable sums to the republic; that it has assisted the state whenever it has stood in need of assistance; that it has raised a multitude of private fortunes, which have prodigiously increased the riches of the nation; in short, that it has doubled, perhaps trebled the activity of the metropolis, by furnishing it with frequent opportunities of forming great enterprises.

THE company usually pay to the state duties of import for all the merchandise they receive from India. By a regulation of the 10th of July 1677, they are annually to pay 32,000 livres (1,400*l.*) in lieu of the duties of export. They obtained the renewal of their grant in 1743, with this formal stipulation, that the republic should receive three per cent. upon the dividend.

dend. It is thought, however, that the government have a right to derive greater advantages from an exclusive privilege of such importance.

It has always been acknowledged by all nations, whatever the form of their government might be, that the estates acquired in any country ought to contribute to the expences of government. The reason of this grand maxim is evident to all capacities. Private fortunes are so essentially connected with the prosperity of the public, that when the latter is injured the former must suffer of course. Thus, when the subjects of a state serve it with their fortunes or their persons, they do nothing but defend their own private interest. The prosperity of the country is the prosperity of each citizen. This maxim, which is true in all governments, has a particular propriety when applied to free societies.

FURTHER than this, there are bodies of men, whose interest, either from the nature of those bodies, their extensive relations, or the variety of their views, are more essentially connected with the common interest. Of this kind is the India company in Holland. The enemies to its trade are enemies to the republic; and its security is established on the same basis with that of the state.

IN the opinion of men of the best discernment, the national debt has sensibly weakened the United Provinces, and affected the general welfare, by gradually increasing the load of taxes. The republic can never be restored to its original splendor, till it is released from the enormous burthen under which it groans; and this relief can only be expected from a company, which it has always encouraged, protected and favoured. To place this powerful body in a situation to render the highest services to the country, it will by no means be necessary to reduce the profits of the proprietors;

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prietors; it will be sufficient to bring it back to those principles of œconomy and simplicity, and to that plan of administration, which laid the foundation of its early prosperity.

A REFORMATION so necessary will admit of no delay. This confidence is due to a government which has always endeavoured to maintain a great number of citizens within itself, and to employ only a small part of them in its distant settlements. It is at the expence of all Europe that Holland has continually increased the number of its subjects: the liberty of conscience allowed there, and the moderation of the laws, have attracted all persons who were oppressed in several other places by a spirit of intoleration and the severity of government.

THE republic has procured means of subsistence to all persons who have been willing to settle and work among them: we have seen at different times the inhabitants of a country ruined by war, seeking security and employment in Holland.

AGRICULTURE could never be a considerable object in Holland, although the land is cultivated to as great a degree of perfection as possible. But the herring fishery supplies the place of agriculture. This is a new method of subsistence, a school for seamen. Born upon the waters, they plough the sea, from whence they get their food; they grow familiar with storms, and learn without risque to overcome dangers.

THE traffic of transport which the republic continually carries on from one European nation to another, is also a kind of navigation, which, without destroying men, supplies them with subsistence by labour.

IN short, navigation, which depopulates a part of Europe, peoples Holland. It is as it were the produce

duce of the country. Her ships are her landed estates, which she makes the most of, at the expence of the stranger.

THE elegant accommodations of life are known in Holland without being an object of pursuit: the refinements of behaviour are adopted with moderation; those of caprice they are unacquainted with. A spirit of order, frugality, and even avarice prevails throughout the nation, and has been carefully kept up by the government.

THE colonies are conducted by the same spirit. They are peopled in general with the scum of the nation, or with foreigners; but rigid laws, and equitable administration, an easy subsistence, and useful labour soon infuse morals into these men, who were exiled from Europe, because they had none.

THE same design of preserving the population prevails in the military system; the republic maintains a great number of foreign troops in Europe, and some in some in the colonies.

THE sailors in Holland are well paid; and foreign seamen are constantly employed either on board their trading vessels, or their men of war.

FOR the purposes of commerce, it is necessary that harmony should be preserved at home, and peace abroad. No people, except the Swiss, take more care to keep on good terms with their neighbours; and they endeavour, still more than the Swiss, to encourage peace among them. The republic preserves unanimity among her citizens, by very excellent laws, which prescribe the duties of every station, by a speedy and disinterested administration of justice, and by regulations admirably well adapted to the merchants. She has shewn the opinion she entertains of the necessity of good faith by her observance of treaties, and has endeavoured to inculcate the same principle among individuals.

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IN a word, we know of no nation in Europe that has considered better what its united advantages of situation, strength, and population allow it to undertake, or that has known and followed more effectually the means of increasing both its population and its strength. We know of none, which having such objects as an extensive commerce and liberty, mutually attracting and supporting each other, hath conducted itself in a better manner for the preservation of both the one and the other.

BUT how are these manners already changed and degenerated from the purity of a republican government ! Personal interests, which become laudable by being combined, are now totally selfish, and corruption is become general. There is no patriotism in that country, which above all others in the universe should inspire its inhabitants with more steadfast attachments. In reality, what patriotic sentiments might we not expect from a nation that can say to itself, This land which I inhabit, has been fertilized by me ; it is I who have embellished, who have created it. This threatening sea, which deluged all our plains, rages in vain against the powerful dikes I have opposed to its fury. I have purified this air which stagnant waters had filled with fatal exhalations. It is by my means that superb cities stand now upon the slime and mud, over which the ocean once rolled its waves. The ports I have constructed, the canals I have digged, received the productions of the whole universe, which I dispense at pleasure. The inheritances of other nations are only possessions which man disputes with man ; that which I shall leave to my posterity, I have ravished from the elements which conspired against my territory, and am now the master of it. It is here that I have established a new arrangement of nature, a new system of manners. I have done every

every thing where there was nothing. Air, land, government, liberty, all these are my works. I enjoy the glory of the past ; and when I cast a look into futurity, I see with satisfaction that my ashes will rest quietly on the same spot where my fore-fathers saw the breaking of storms.

WHAT motives these for idolizing one's country ! Yet there is no longer any public spirit in Holland : it is a whole, the parts of which have no other relation among themselves than the spot they occupy. Meanness, baseness and dishonesty characterise now the conquerors of Philip. They make a traffic of their oath, as of their merchandise ; and they will soon become the refuse of the universe, which they had astonished by their industry and by their virtues.

YE unworthy members of the government, under which ye live, shudder at least at the dangers that surround you ! Those who have slavish souls are not far removed from slavery. The sacred fire of liberty can only be kept up by chaste hands. Ye are not now in the same state of anarchy, as when the sovereigns of Europe all equally opposed by the nobles in their respective states, could not carry on their designs either with secrecy, unanimity or rapidity ; as when the equilibrium of the several powers was merely the effect of their mutual debility. At present, power grown more independent, confirms those advantages to a monarchy which a free state can never enjoy. What have republicans to oppose to superiority so formidable ? Their virtues ; but ye have lost them. The corruption of your manners, and of your magistrates, encourages every where the detractors of liberty ; and, perhaps, your fatal example is the means of imposing a heavier yoke on other nations. What answer would you wish us to make to those men, who either from the prejudice of education or the want of honesty, are perpetually

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petually telling us; This is the government which you extol so much in your writings; these are the happy consequences of that system of liberty you hold so dear. To those vices which you have laid to the charge of despotism, they have added another, which surpasses them all, the inability to stop the progress of evil. What answer can be given to so severe a satire on democracy?

INDUSTRIOUS Hollanders! ye who were formerly so renowned for your bravery, and are at present so distinguished by your wealth, tremble at the idea of being again reduced to crouch under the rod you have broken, and which still hangs over you. Would you learn how the spirit of commerce may be united and preserved with the spirit of liberty? View from your shores that island, and those people, whom nature presents to you as a model for your imitation. Keep your eyes constantly fixed upon England: if the alliance of that kingdom has been your support, its conduct will now serve you as an instructor, and its example as a guide.

B O O K III.

Settlements, Trade, and Conquests of the English in the East Indies.

WE know nothing either of the period in which the British isles were peopled, nor of the origin of their first inhabitants. All we can learn from the most authentic historical records is, that they were successively visited by the Phœnicians, the Carthaginians, and the Gauls. The traders of these nations used to go there to exchange earthen vessels, salt, all kinds of iron, and copper instruments, for skins, slaves, hounds, and bull-dogs, and especially for tin. Their profits were just what they pleased in their dealings with savages equally ignorant of the value of what they sold or bought.

A LOOSE speculation would lead us to imagine, that islanders have been the first civilized people among mankind. Nothing puts a stop to the excursions of people living on a continent: they may get their livelihood and avoid fighting at the same time. In islands, war, and the inconveniences of a too limited society, should sooner make laws and treaties necessary. But whatever is the reason of it, we generally see the manners and the government of islanders formed later and more imperfectly than others. All the traditions respecting Britain, particularly confirm this assertion.

THE Roman empire was not sufficiently durable, and too eagerly disputed, to improve in any considerable

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Sketch of
the ancient
state of the
English
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able degree the industry of the Britons. Even the small progress that husbandry and the arts had made during this period, was lost as soon as that haughty power had determined to abandon this conquest. The spirit of slavery which the southern inhabitants of Britain had contracted, deprived them of the courage necessary to resist at first the overflowings of their neighbours the Picts, who had saved themselves from the yoke by flying towards the north of the island, and prevented them afterwards from being able to oppose the more destructive, more obstinate and more numerous expeditions of plunderers that poured in swarms from the more northern parts of Europe.

ALL nations were affected with this dreadful plague, the most destructive, perhaps, that ever was recorded in the annals of the world; but the calamities which Great Britain particularly experienced are inexpressible. Every year, several times even in a year, her countries were ravaged, her houses burnt, her women ravished, her temples stripped, her inhabitants massacred, put to torture, or enslaved. All these misfortunes succeeded each other with inconceivable rapidity. When the country was so far destroyed that nothing remained to glut the avidity of these barbarians, they seized on the land itself. One nation succeeded another. One troop supervening, expelled or exterminated the one that was already established; and this succession of revolutions constantly kept up indolence mistrust and misery. In these dispiriting times, the Britons had scarce any commercial connection with the continent. Exchanges were even so rare amongst them, that it was necessary to have witnesses for the sale of the least trifle.

It might have been expected that the union of the two kingdoms would have put a stop to these calamities;

ties; when William the Conqueror subdued Great Britain a little while after the middle of the eleventh century. His followers came from countries rather more civilized, more active, and more industrious, than those they came to settle in. Such a communication ought naturally to have rectified and enlarged the ideas of the conquered people. The introduction of the feudal government occasioned so speedy and so complete a revolution in matters of property, that every thing was thrown into confusion.

THE minds of men were scarcely settled, and the conquerors and the conquered had but just begun to consider themselves as one and the same people, when the abilities and strength of the nation were engaged in supporting the pretensions of their sovereigns to the crown of France. In these obstinate wars, the English displayed military talents and courage; but after several great efforts, and considerable success, they were forced back into their island, where domestic troubles exposed them to fresh calamities.

DURING these different periods, the whole commerce was in the hands of the Jews and the bankers of Lombardy, who were alternately favoured and robbed, considered as useful persons, and condemned to death, expelled and recalled: these tumults were increased by the audacity of the pirates, who being sometimes protected by the government, with which they shared their spoils, attacked all ships indiscriminately and frequently sank their crews. The interest of money was at fifty per cent. Leather, furs, butter, lead, and tin were the only things exported from England at a very moderate rate, and thirty thousand sacks of wool, which returned annually a more considerable sum. As the English were then totally unacquainted with the art of dyeing this wool, and manufacturing it with elegance, the greatest part of this money returned.

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returned. To remedy this inconvenience, foreign manufactures were invited, and the people were prohibited from wearing any cloaths that were not of home manufacture. At the same time, the exportation of manufactured wool and wrought iron was forbidden; two laws altogether worthy of the age in which they were instituted.

HENRY VII. permitted the barons to dispose of their lands, and the common people to buy them. This regulation diminished the inequality which subsisted before between the fortunes of the lords and their vassals; it made the latter more independent, and inspired the people with the desire of enriching themselves, and with the hope of enjoying their riches. There were many obstacles to this wish, and this hope; some of which were removed. The company of merchants established at London was prevented from exacting in future the sum of one thousand five hundred and seventy-five livres (68l. 18s. 1d. $\frac{1}{2}$) from each of the other merchants in the kingdom, desirous of trading at the great fairs of the low countries. In order to fix a greater number of people to the labours of husbandry, it was enacted, that no person should put his son or daughter out to any kind of apprenticeship, without being possessed of a rent of twenty-two livres ten sols (near 20s.) in landed property: this absurd law was afterwards mitigated.

UNFORTUNATELY that law which regulated the price of all sorts of provisions, of woollens, of workmens wages, of stuffs, and of cloathing, was maintained in its full force. Other impediments even were thrown in the way of commerce, on account of some pernicious combinations that were set on foot. The loan of money at interest, and the profits of exchange were strictly prohibited, as usurious in themselves, or calculated to introduce usury. The exportation of money

money in any kind of coin was forbidden; and, in order to prevent foreign merchants from carrying it clandestinely away, they were compelled to change into English merchandise the entire produce of the goods they had brought into England. The exportation of horses was likewise prohibited; and the people were not sufficiently enlightened to discover that such a prohibition would necessarily cause the propagation and improvement of the species to be neglected. At length corporations were established in all the towns; that is to say, the state authorised all persons of the same profession, to make such regulations as they should think necessary for their exclusive preservation and success. The nation is still oppressed with a regulation so contrary to general industry, and which reduces every thing to a kind of monopoly.

UPON considering such a number of strange laws, we might be induced to think that Henry was either indifferent about the prosperity of his kingdom, or that he was totally deficient in understanding. Nevertheless, it is certain that this prince, notwithstanding his extreme avarice, often lent considerable sums of money, without interest, to merchants who had not property sufficient to carry on the schemes they had planned: besides, the wisdom of his government is so well confirmed, that he is accounted, with reason, one of the greatest monarchs that ever filled the throne of England. But, notwithstanding all the efforts of genius, it requires a succession of several ages before any science can be reduced to simple principles. It is the same thing with theories as with machines, which are always very complicated at first, and which are only freed in the course of time by observation and experience, from those useless wheels which served merely to increase their friction.

THE knowledge of the succeeding reigns was not much more extensive upon those matters we are treat-

ing of. Some Flemings settled in England, were the only good workmen in that country; they were almost always insulted and oppressed by the English workmen, who were jealous without emulation: they complained that all the customers went to the Flemings, and they raised the price of corn. The government adopted these popular prejudices, and forbade all strangers to employ more than two workmen in their shops. The merchants were not better treated than the workmen, and those even who were naturalized, were obliged to pay the same duties as aliens. Ignorance was so general, that the cultivation of the best lands was neglected, in order to convert them into pasture lands, even at the time that the number of sheep, which might be in one flock, was restrained by the laws to two thousand. All mercantile correspondences were confined in the low countries. The inhabitants of these provinces bought the English commodities, and circulated them through the different parts of Europe. It is probable that the nation would not have made any considerable figure for a long time, without a concurrence of favourable circumstances.

THE Duke of Alva's cruelties drove several able manufacturers into England, who carried the art of the fine Flemish manufactures to London. The persecutions which the Protestants suffered in France supplied England with workmen of all kinds. Elizabeth impatient of contradiction, but knowing and desirous of doing what was right, at once despotic and popular, with the advantages of a good understanding, and of being properly obeyed, availed herself of the fermentation of people's minds, as prevalent throughout all her dominions as through the rest of Europe; and while this fermentation produced among other people nothing but theological disputes, and civil or foreign wars; in England, it gave rise to a lively emulation for commerce, and for the improvement of navigation.

THE

THE English learned to build their ships at home, which they bought before of the merchants of Lubec and Hamburgh. They were soon the only persons who traded to Muscovy by the way of Archangel just discovered; and they presently became competitors with the Hanse towns in Germany, and in the north. They began to trade with Turkey. Several of their navigators attempted, though in vain, to discover a passage to India by the northern seas. At length Drake, Stephens, Cavendish, and some others, reached that place, some by the south sea, and others by doubling the Cape of Good Hope.

THE success of these voyages was sufficient to determine the most able merchants of London to establish a company in the year 1600; which obtained an exclusive privilege of trading to the East Indies. The act which granted this privilege, fixed it for fifteen years: it declared, that if it should prove injurious to the state, it should be annulled, and the company suppressed, by giving two years previous notice to its members.

First voyages of the English to India.

THIS clause of reserve was owing to the displeasure the commons had lately shewn on account of a grant, the novelty of which might possibly offend them. The queen had returned to the house, and had spoken on this occasion in a manner worthy to serve as a lesson to all sovereigns.

"GENTLEMEN," said she to the members of the house commissioned to return her thanks, "I am extremely sensible of your attachment, and of the care you have taken to give me an authentic testimony of it. This affection for my person had determined you to apprize me of a fault I had inadvertently fallen into from ignorance, but in which my will had no share. If your vigilance had not disco-

“ vered to me the mischiefs which my mistake might
 “ have produced, what pain should I not have felt—
 “ I, who have nothing dearer to me than the affection
 “ and preservation of my people? May my hand sud-
 “ denly wither, may my heart be struck at once with
 “ a deadly blow, before I shall ever grant particular
 “ privileges that my subjects may have reason to com-
 “ plain of! The splendour of the throne has not so far
 “ dazzled my eyes, that I should prefer the abuse of
 “ an unbounded authority to the use of a power ex-
 “ ercised by justice. The brilliancy of royalty blinds
 “ only those princes who are ignorant of the duties
 “ that the crown imposes. I dare believe that I shall
 “ not be ranked among such monarchs. I know that
 “ I hold not the scepter for my own proper advantage,
 “ and that I am entirely devoted to the society, which
 “ has put its confidence in me. It is my happiness to
 “ see that the state has hitherto prospered under my
 “ government; and that my subjects are worthy that
 “ I should yield up my crown and my life for their
 “ sakes. Impute not to me the improper measures I
 “ may be engaged in, nor the irregularities which may
 “ be committed under the sanction of my name. You
 “ know that the ministers of princes are too often
 “ guided by private interests, that truth seldom reach-
 “ es the ears of kings, and that obliged as they are,
 “ from the multiplicity of affairs they are laden with,
 “ to fix their attention on those which are of the
 “ greatest importance, it is impossible they should see
 “ every thing with their own eyes.”

THE funds of this company were, at first, far from
 being considerable. Part of them was expended in fit-
 ting out a fleet of four ships which sailed in the begin-
 ning of the year 1601; and the rest was sent abroad
 in money and merchandise.

LANCASTER,

LANCASTER, who commanded the expedition, arrived the year following at the port of Achen, which was that time a celebrated mart. Intelligence was received of the victories gained by the English over the Spaniards at sea; and this intelligence procured him a very distinguished reception. The king behaved to him in the same manner as if he had been his equal; he ordered that his own wives richly habited, should play several airs in his presence, on a variety of instruments. This favour was followed by all the compliances that could be wished for to facilitate the establishment of a safe and advantageous commerce. The English admiral was received at Bantam in the same manner as at the place where he first landed; and a ship which he had dispatched to the Molucca islands, brought him a considerable cargo of cloves and nutmegs. With these valuable spices, and the pepper he took in at Java and Sumatra, he returned safe to Europe.

THIS early success determined the society who had intrusted their interests in the hands of this able man, to form settlements in India; but not without the consent of the natives. They did not wish to begin with conquests. Their expeditions were nothing more than the enterprises of humane and fair traders. They made themselves beloved: but they gained nothing by this good impression, except a few factories, and were in no condition to sustain the attempts of their rivals, who were very formidable.

THE Portuguese and Dutch were in possession of large provinces, well fortified places, and good harbours. By these advantages their trade was secured against the natives of the country, and against new competitors; their return to Europe was rendered easy; and they had opportunities of getting a good sale

sale for the commodities they carried to Asia, and to purchase those they wanted at a moderate price. The English, on the contrary, exposed to the caprice of seasons and of people, having no strength, or place of security, and deriving their supplies from England only, could not carry on an advantageous trade. They found how difficult it was to acquire great riches without great injustice, and that if they would surpass or even equal the nations they had censured, they must pursue the same conduct.

THE plan of forming lasting settlements, and of attempting conquests, seemed too great to be accomplished by the forces of an infant society: but they flattered themselves that they should meet with protection, because they thought themselves useful. They were disappointed in their expectations. They could obtain nothing from James I. a weak prince, infected with the false philosophy of his age, of a subtle and pedantic genius, and better qualified to be at the head of an university than to preside over an empire. By their activity, perseverance, and judicious choice of officers and factors, the company provided those succours which were refused them by their sovereign. They erected forts, and founded colonies in the islands of Java, Poleron, Amboyna, and Banda. They likewise shared the spice-trade with the Dutch, which will always be the most certain branch of eastern commerce, because the objects of it are become necessary articles of life. It was of more importance at the time we are speaking of, because the luxury which arises from caprice had not then made so much progress in Europe as it has done since, and because there was not that prodigious demand for India linens, stuffs, teas, and Chinese varnish, that there is at present.

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THE Dutch, who had driven the Portuguese from the spice-islands, never intended to suffer a nation to settle there, whose maritime force, character, and government, would make them formidable rivals. They had many advantages on their side, such as powerful colonies; a well exercised navy, firm alliances, a great fund of wealth, a knowledge of the country, and of the principles and details of commerce, which the English wanting, were attacked in all possible ways.

THE first step their rival took was to drive them from the fertile places where they had formed settlements. In the islands where their power was less established, they endeavoured, by accusations, equally void of truth and decency, to make them odious to the natives of the country. These shameful expedients not meeting with all the success the Dutch expected, those avaricious traders resolved to proceed to acts of violence. An extraordinary occasion brought on the commencement of hostilities sooner than was expected.

IT is a custom at Java for the new married women to dispute with their husbands the first favours of love. This kind of contest, which the men take a pride in terminating immediately, and the women in protracting as long as possible, sometimes lasts several weeks. The king of Bantam having overcome the resistance of a new bride, made public entertainments in celebration of his triumph. The strangers in the harbour were invited to these festivals. Unhappily for them, the English were treated with too much distinction. The Dutch looked with a jealous eye upon this preference, and did not defer revenge a moment. They attacked them on all sides.

THE Indian ocean became, at this period, the scene of the most bloody engagements between the maritime forces of the two nations. They fought out, attacked,

attacked, and combated each other with the spirit of men who chose to conquer or die. Equal courage appeared on both sides, but there was a disparity in their forces. The English were on the point of being overcome, when some moderate people in Europe, which the flames of war had not reached, endeavoured to find out the means of accommodating their differences. By an infatuation, which it is not easy to explain, the very strangest of all was adopted.

IN 1619 the two companies signed a treaty, the purport of which was, that the Molucca islands, Amboyna, and Banda, should belong in common to the two nations: that the English should have one third, and the Dutch two thirds of the produce at a fixed price: that each, in proportion to their interest, should contribute to the defence of these islands: that a council composed of skilful men of both parties, should regulate all the affairs of commerce at Batavia: that this agreement, guaranteed by the respective sovereigns, should last twenty years; and that if any differences should arise during this interval, that could not be settled by the two companies, they should be determined by the king of Great Britain and the States-general. Among all the political conventions preserved in history, it would be difficult to find a more extraordinary one than this. It had the fate it deserved.

THE Dutch were no sooner informed of it in India, than they devised means to render it ineffectual. The situation of affairs favoured their designs. The Spaniards and the Portuguese had taken advantage of the disputes between their enemies, to regain the settlements in the Moluccas. They might fortify themselves there; and it was dangerous to give them time. The English commissaries concurred with them in opinion, that it would be best to attack them without delay; but added,

ed, that they were not at all prepared to act in concert with them. This declaration, which was expected, was registered ; and their associates embarked alone in an expedition, all the advantages of which they reserved to themselves. The agents of the Dutch company had only one step further to go, to get all the spices into the hands of their masters, which was, to drive their rivals from the island of Amboyna. The method by which they succeeded in their project was very extraordinary.

A JAPANESE, in the Dutch service at Amboyna, made himself suspected by his imprudent curiosity. He was seized, and confessed that he had entered into an engagement with the soldiers of his nation to deliver up the fort to the English. His comrades confirmed his account, making the same confession. Upon these unanimous depositions, the authors of the conspiracy, who did not disavow, but even acknowledged it, were loaded with irons : and the ignominious death which all the criminals were condemned to suffer, put an end to the plot. This is the account given by the Dutch.

THE English have always considered this accusation as the suggestion of an unbounded avarice. They have maintained that it was absurd to suppose, that ten factors and eleven foreign soldiers could have formed the project of seizing upon a place, which was garrisoned by two hundred men : that even if these unhappy men had thought it possible to execute so extravagant a plan, would they not have been discouraged by the impossibility of obtaining succours to defend against them an enemy who would have besieged them on all sides ? To make a conspiracy of this kind probable, it requires stronger proof than a confession extorted from the accused by extremity of torture. The torments of the rack never afforded any
other

other proof, than that of the courage or weakness of those whom barbarous custom condemned to it. These considerations, strengthened by several others, almost equally convincing, have made the story of the conspiracy of Amboyna so suspected, that it has generally been considered as a cloak to cruelty and avarice.

THE ministry of James I. and the whole nation, were at that time so engaged in ecclesiastical subtleties, and the discussion of the rights of king and people, that they were not sensible of the insults offered to the English name in the East. This indifference produced a caution which soon degenerated into weakness. These islanders, however, maintained the bravery of their character better at Coromandel and Malabar.

THEY had established factories at Mazulipatam, Calicut, and several other ports, and even at Delhi. Surat, the richest mart in these countries, tempted their ambition in 1611. The inhabitants were disposed to receive them; but the Portuguese declared, that if they suffered this nation to make a settlement, they would burn all the towns upon the coast, and seize all the Indian vessels. The government was awed by these menaces. Middleton, disappointed in his hopes, was obliged to abandon the place, and return through a numerous fleet, to which he did more damage than he received.

CAPTAIN Thomas Best arrived in these latitudes the year following, with a very considerable force. He was received at Surat without any opposition. The agents he carried out with him had scarce entered upon their employments when a formidable armament from Goa made its appearance. The English admiral, reduced to this alternative, either of betraying the interests he was intrusted with, or of exposing himself to the greatest danger in defending them, did not hesitate what part he should take. He twice attacked the Portuguese, and notwithstanding

ing the great inferiority of his Squadron, gained the victory each time. However, the advantage the vanquished derived from their position, their ports, and their fortresses, always made the English navigation in Guzarat very difficult. They were obliged to maintain a constant struggle against an obstinate enemy that was not discouraged by defeats. No tranquillity was to be obtained, but at the price of new contests and new triumphs.

THE news of these glorious successes against a nation which had hitherto been thought invincible, reached as far as the capital of Persia.

THIS vast country, so celebrated in antiquity, appeared to have been free at the first institution of its government. The monarchy rose upon the ruins of a depraved republic. The Persians were long happy under this form of government: their manners were as simple as their laws. At length the sovereigns were inspired with the spirit of conquest. At that time the treasures of Assyria, the spoils of many trading nations, and the tribute arising from a vast number of provinces, brought immense riches into the empire, which soon occasioned a total alteration. The disorders rose to such a pitch, that the care of the public amusements seemed to engage the chief attention of government.

A PEOPLE totally devoted to pleasure could not fail in a short time to be reduced to slavery. They were successively brought into that state by the Macedonians, the Parthians, the Arabians, and the Tartars, and towards the close of the fifteenth century by the Sophis, who pretended to be the descendents of Aly, author of the famous reformation, by which Mohammedism was divided into two branches.

No prince of this new race made himself so famous as Schah-Abbas, surnamed the Great. He conquered Candahar,

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Candahar, several places of importance upon the Black Sea, part of Arabia, and drove the Turks out of Georgia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, and all the countries they had conquered beyond the Euphrates.

THESE victories produced remarkable changes in the interior administration of the empire. The great men took advantage of the civil broils to make themselves independent; they were degraded, and all posts of consequence were given to strangers, who had neither the power nor inclination to raise factions. The army having taken upon themselves to dispose of the crown at their pleasure; they were restrained by foreign troops, whose religion and customs were different. Anarchy had inclined the people to sedition; and to prevent this, the towns and villages were filled with inhabitants chosen out of nations whose manners and character bore no resemblance to those of the ancient inhabitants. These arrangements gave rise to a despotism the most absolute, perhaps, that any country ever experienced.

IT is a matter of astonishment that the great Abbas should have combined some views of public utility with this government, which was naturally oppressive. He patronized the arts, and established them in the capital, and in the provinces. All who came into his dominions, if they possessed talents of any kind, were sure of being well received, assisted, and rewarded. He would often say, that strangers were the best ornaments of an empire, and added more to the dignity of the prince than the pomp of the most refined luxury.

WHILE Persia was rising from its ruins by the different branches of industry that were every where established, a number of Armenians, transplanted to Isfahan, carried the spirit of commerce into the heart of the empire. In a little time, these traders, and the natives of the country who followed their example, spread

spread themselves over the east, into Holland, England, the Mediterranean and the Baltic, and wherever commerce was carried on with spirit and advantage. The Sophi himself bore a part in their enterprises, and advanced them considerable sums, which they employed to advantage in the most celebrated marts in the world. They were obliged to return the capital on the terms agreed upon, and if they had increased it by their industry, he granted them some recompence.

THE Portuguese, who found that part of the Indian trade with Asia and Europe was likely to be diverted to Persia, imposed restraints upon it; they would not suffer the Persians to purchase merchandise any where but from their magazines: they fixed the price of it; and if they sometimes allowed it to be taken at the places where it was manufactured, it was always to be carried in their own bottoms, charging all expences of freight and exorbitant customs. This stretch of power displeased the great Abbas, who being informed of the resentment of the English, proposed to unite their maritime strength with his land forces, to besiege Ormus. This place was attacked by the combined arms of the two nations, and taken in the year 1622, after a contest that lasted two months. The conquerors divided the spoil, which was immense, and afterwards totally demolished the place.

THREE or four leagues from hence there was upon the continent a harbour called Gombroon, or Bender-Abassi. Nature seemed not to have designed it should be inhabited. It is situated at the foot of a ridge of mountains of an excessive height; the air you breathe seems to be on fire; fatal vapours are continually exhaling from the bowels of the earth; the fields are black and dry, as if they had been scorched with fire. Notwithstanding these inconveniences, as Bender-Abassi had
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the advantage of being placed at the entrance of the Gulph, the Persian monarch chose to make it the center of the extensive trade he intended to carry on with India. The English joined in this project. A perpetual exemption from all imposts, and a moiety of the product of the customs, were granted them, on condition they should maintain, at least, two men of war in the Gulph. This precaution was thought necessary to frustrate the attempts of the Portuguese, whose resentment was still to be dreaded.

FROM this time Bender-Abassi, which was before a poor fishing town, became a flourishing city. The English carried thither spices, pepper, and sugar, from the markets of the east; and iron, lead, and cloths, from the ports of Europe. The profits arising from these commodities were increased by the very high freight paid them by the Armenians, who were still in possession of the richest branch of the Indian commerce.

THESE merchants had, for a long time, been concerned in the linen trade. They had never been supplanted either by the Portuguese, who were intent only on plunder, or by the Dutch, whose attention was totally confined to the spice trade. They might, nevertheless, be apprehensive, that they should not be able to withstand the competition of a people who were equally rich, industrious, active, and frugal. The Armenians acted then as they have ever done since: they went to India, where they bought cotton, which they sent to the spinners; the cloths were manufactured under their own inspection, and carried to Gombroom, from whence they were transported to Ispahan. From thence they were conveyed into the different provinces of the empire, the dominions of the Grand Signior, and into Europe, where the custom has prevailed of calling them Persian manufactures, though

though they were never made but on the coast of Comorandel. Such is the influence of names upon opinions, that the vulgar error, which attributes to Persia the manufacture of India, will in a series of ages, perhaps, pass with the learned in future times for an incontestible truth. The insurmountable difficulties which errors of this kind have occasioned in the history of Pliny, and other ancient writers should induce us to set a high value on the labours of the literati of this age, who collect the works of nature and of art with a view of transmitting them to posterity.

IN exchange for the merchandise they carried to Persia, they gave the following articles which were either the produce of their own soil, or the fruits of their industry.

SILK, which was the principal commodity; and was prepared and exported in great quantities.

CARAMANIAN wool, which nearly resembles that of the Vicuna. It was of great use in the manufacture of hats, and of some stuffs. It is a remarkable circumstance in the goats which supply it, that in the month of May the fleece falls off of itself.

TURQUOISES, which were more or less valuable, according as they were procured from one or other of the tree mines that produce them. They were formerly an article of the dress of our ladies.

GOLD brocades, which sold at a higher price than any of those which are the produce of the most celebrated manufactures. Some of them were made to be worn on one, and others on both sides. They were used for window-curtains, skreens and magnificent sofas.

TAPESTRY, which has since been so well imitated in Europe, and has for a long time been the richest furniture of our rooms.

MOROCCO leather, which, as other skins, is brought to a degree of perfection that cannot be equalled any where else.

SHAGREEN

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the English
in India.

SHAGREEN, goats hair, rose water, medicinal roots, gums for colours, dates, horses, arms, and many other articles, of which some are sold in India, and others carried to Europe.

THOUGH the Dutch contrived to get all the trade of India into their hands, they viewed the transactions of Persia with a jealous eye. They thought the privileges enjoyed by their rivals in the road of Bender-Abassi, might be compensated by the advantage they had in having a greater quantity of spices, and entered into a competition with them.

THE English, harassed in every mart by a powerful enemy resolutely bent on their destruction, were obliged every where to give way. Their fate was hastened by those civil and religious dissensions, which drowned their country in blood, and extinguished all sentiment and knowledge. India was totally forgotten, while the most important interests were at stake; and the company, oppressed and discouraged, were reduced to nothing at the time that the death of Charles I. afforded so instructive and dreadful a lesson.

CROMWELL, enraged at the favours the Dutch had shewn to the unfortunate family of the Stuarts, and at the asylum they had afforded to the English who had been proscribed; and piqued that the republic of the United Provinces should pretend to the dominion of the sea; proud of his success, and sensible of his own strength, and of that of the nation under his command, resolved at the same time to inspire respect for his country, and to avenge himself. He declared war against the Dutch.

OF all the maritime wars which have been recorded in history, none were conducted with more knowledge, or were more famous for the skill of the commanders, and the bravery of the sailors; none have abounded with so many obstinate and bloody engagements. The English gained the superiority, and owed it

it to the size of their ships, in which particular they have since been imitated by other European nations.

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THE protector, whose voice was law, did not exert himself as far as he might in favour of India. He contented himself with providing for the security of the English trade, procuring a disavowal of the massacre at Amboyna, and insisting upon an indemnification for the descendents of the unhappy victims who perished in that dreadful transaction. No mention is made in the treaty, of the forts taken from the nation by the Dutch, in the island of Java, and in several of the Moluccas. It was stipulated, indeed, that the island of Puleron should be restored : but the usurpers, seconded by the English negotiator whom they had corrupted, found means to elude this article so dextrously, which would and ought to have produced a rivalry in the spice trade, that the observance of it was never enforced.

NOTWITHSTANDING this neglect, as soon as the company had obtained from the protector a renewal of their privileges in 1657, and found themselves firmly supported by the public authority, they shewed a spirit of resolution which they had lost during their late misfortunes. Their courage increased with their rights.

Revival of
the English
trade in In-
dia.

THE success they met in Europe, accompanied them into Asia, Arabia, Persia, Indostan, the eastern parts of India, China, and all the markets where the English had formerly traded, were opened to them. They were even received with more frankness and less distrust than they had experienced formerly. Their trade was carried on with great activity, and their profits were very considerable: nothing was wanting to complete their success, but to gain admittance into Japan, which they attempted. But the Japanese being informed by the Dutch that the king of

Misfortunes
and misconduct
of the
English in
India.

England had married a daughter of the king of Portugal, refused to admit the English into their ports.

NOTWITHSTANDING this disappointment, the company's affairs were in a very flourishing condition: they flattered themselves with the pleasing hopes of giving a greater extent and security to their affairs, when they found their career retarded by a rivalry, which their own success created.

SOME traders, fired with the relation of the advantages to be obtained in India, resolved to make voyages thither. Charles II. who though seated on the throne was nothing more than a private man of voluptuous and dissolute manners, gave them permission for a valuable consideration: while, on the other hand, he extorted large sums from the company, to enable him to persecute those who encroached upon their charter. A competition of this nature would unavoidably degenerate into piracy. The English thus becoming enemies to each other, carried on their disputes with a spirit of rancour and animosity, which lowered them in the opinion of the people of Asia.

THE Dutch wished to take advantage of so singular a conjuncture. These republicans had for a long time been absolute masters of the Indian trade. They had seen with regret a part of it taken out of their hands, at the conclusion of the civil wars in England. They hoped to recover it by the superiority of their forces, when in 1664 the two nations entered into a war in all parts of the world; but the hostilities did not continue long enough to answer these sanguine expectations. As the peace prevented them from having recourse to open violence against one another, they resolved to attack the sovereigns of the country to oblige them to shut their ports against their rival. The foolish and despicable behaviour of the English increased the insolence of the Dutch, who proceeded

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so far as to drive them ignominiously from Bantam in 1680.

So serious and public an insult roused the spirit of the English company. The desire of re-establishing their character, gratifying their revenge, and maintaining their interests, animated them to the most spirited exertions. They equipped a fleet of twenty-three ships, with eight thousand regular troops on board. They were ready to sail, when their departure was postponed by the king's orders. Charles, whose necessities and licentiousness were unbounded, entertained hopes of receiving an immense sum to induce him to recall this armament. As he could not obtain it from his subjects, he was resolved to receive it from his enemies. He sacrificed the honour and trade of his nation for 2,250,000 livres (98,437l. 10s.) which were paid him by the Dutch, who were intimidated by these great preparations. The intended expedition never took place.

THE company exhausted by the expences of an armament, which had been rendered useless by the venality of the court, sent their vessels to India without the necessary funds to supply the cargoes; but with orders to the factors, if possible to take them upon credit. The fidelity they had hitherto observed in their engagements procured them 6,750,000 livres (295,312l. 10s.) Nothing can be more extraordinary than the method that was taken to pay them back.

JOSIAS CHILD who from being a director was become the tyrant of the Company, is said, unknown to his colleagues, to have sent orders to India to invent some pretence or other, to defraud the lenders of their money. The execution of this iniquitous project was intrusted to his brother John Child, who was governor of Bombay. This avaricious, turbulent, and savage man immediately proceeded to make several claims up-

on the governor of Surat, some more ridiculous than others. These demands meeting with the reception they deserved, he attacked all the vessels belonging to the subjects of the crown of Delhi, and singled out in particular the ships from Surat, as being the richest. He paid no regard to vessels that sailed with passports from that crown, and carried his insolence so far as to seize a fleet laden with provision for the Mogul's army. This terrible pillage, which lasted the whole year 1688, occasioned incredible losses throughout all Indostan.

AURENGZEBE, who held the reigns of the empire with a steady hand, did not lose a moment in revenging so great an outrage. In the beginning of the year 1689, one of his lieutenants landed with twenty thousand men at Bombay, an island of consequence on the coast of Malabar, which a princess of Portugal had brought as her dowry to Charles II. and which that monarch had ceded to the company in 1668. On the enemy's approach, the fort of Magazan was abandoned with such precipitation, that money, provisions, several chests of arms, and fourteen pieces of heavy cannon were left behind. The Indian general, encouraged by this first advantage, attacked the English in the field, routed them, and obliged them to retire into the principal fortress, which he invested, where he hoped soon to make them surrender.

CHILD, who was as dastardly in time of danger as he had been daring in his piracies, immediately dispatched deputies to the emperor's court, to sue for pardon. After many intreaties, and much submission, the English were admitted into the emperor's presence with their hands tied, and their faces towards the ground. Aurengzebe, who was desirous of preserving a connection which he thought would be useful to his subjects, was not inflexible. Having delivered himself

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in the stile of an incensed sovereign, who, could, and ought, perhaps, to revenge himself, he yielded to their intreaties and submission. The banishment of the author of the troubles, and an adequate compensation for such of his subjects as had been plundered, was all the justice exacted on this occasion by the supreme will of the most despotic monarch that ever existed. On these moderate terms, the English were permitted still to enjoy the privileges they had obtained at different times in the roads belonging to the Mogul.

THUS ended this unhappy affair, which for several years interrupted the trade of the company, brought on an expence of between nine and ten millions (on an average about 416,000*l.*) occasioned the loss of five large vessels, and a greater number of small ones; destroyed many thousand excellent sailors, and ended in the ruin of the credit and honour of the nation; two particulars, the value of which can never be estimated too highly.

By changing their maxims and their conduct, the company might have flattered themselves with the prospect of being extricated from the abyss into which their own behaviour had plunged them. These hopes were soon dashed by a revolution which did not directly concern them. James II. a tyrannical and fanatic prince, but one who understood maritime affairs and commerce better than any of his contemporaries, was deposed. This event put all Europe in arms. The consequences of these bloody quarrels are well known. Perhaps, it is not a matter of such universal notoriety, that the French privateers took four thousand two hundred English merchantmen, valued at six hundred seventy-five millions of livres (29,531,250*l.*) and that the greatest part of the vessels returning from India were included in this fatal list.

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THESE depredations were succeeded by a spirit of œconomy, which must naturally hasten the ruin of the company. The French refugees had carried the culture of flax and hemp into Ireland and Scotland. For the encouragement of this branch of industry, it was thought proper to prohibit the wear of Indian linsens, except Muslins, and those which were necessary for the African trade. How could a body already exhausted sustain so unforeseen, so heavy a stroke?

THE peace which should have put an end to these misfortunes, filled up the measure of them. A general clamour was raised in the three kingdoms against the company. It was not their decline that raised them enemies; it only encouraged those they had already. They met with opposition at their first establishment. Ever since the year 1615, several politicians had declaimed against the trade to the East Indies. They asserted, that it weakened the naval strength by destroying great numbers of men; and lessened the Levant and Russian commerce, without affording an equivalent advantage. These clamours, though contradicted by judicious people, grew so violent towards the year 1628, that the company, seeing themselves exposed to the odium of the nation, applied to government. They petitioned that the nature of their commerce might be examined: that it might be prohibited, if it were contrary to the interest of the state; and if favourable to them, that it might be authorised by a public declaration. The opposition of the nation, which had been some time dormant, was renewed with more fury than ever, at the period we are speaking of. Those who were less severe in their speculations, consented to a trade with India; but maintained that it should be laid open to the whole nation. An exclusive charter was, in their opinion, a manifest encroachment upon liberty. According to them, government was established by the people with a view of
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advancing the general good : and it would be a crime against it to sacrifice public to private interests, by tolerating odious monopolies. They supported this useful and incontestable principle, by appealing to a recent instance. They urged, that during the rebellion, the private merchants who had got possession of the Asiatic seas, carried double the quantity of national goods that were formerly brought, and were enabled to sell commodities on their return at so low a price as to supplant the Dutch in all European markets. But those acute republicans, who were certain of their ruin, if the English should continue any longer to conduct their affairs on the principles of universal liberty, bribed some persons to prevail with Cromwell to form a separate company. These secret practices were countenanced by the English merchants concerned in that trade, who hoped for greater advantages in future ; when being the only venders, they might impose what terms they pleased upon the consumers. The protector, deceived by the artful insinuations of both, renewed the charter, but for seven years only, that he might alter his conduct, if he found reason to think he had taken a wrong step.

THIS step did not appear improper to every one. Several people were of opinion, that the trade to India could not be carried on with advantage, without an exclusive privilege : but many of them maintained that the present charter was insufficient, because it had been granted by kings who had no right to grant it. They recited many acts of this kind which were abrogated by parliament in the reigns of Edward III. Henry IV. James I. and other princes. Charles II. indeed, obtained a verdict of this nature in the court of common pleas, but it was founded upon a frivolous pretence. This tribunal had the confidence to declare, *That the prince had authority to prevent his subjects from*
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holding commerce with infidels, lest the purity of their faith should be contaminated.

THOUGH the parties above-mentioned were actuated by private, and even opposite views, they all united in the plan of making the trade free, or at least of procuring the reversal of the company's charter. The nation, in general, were on their side: but the body that was attacked, defended itself by its partisans, the ministry, and all the dependents of the court, who made this a common cause. Each party had recourse to libels, intrigue and corruption. These contending passions produced one of those storms, the violence of which can hardly be felt any where but in England. The several factions, sects and interests maintained a furious combat; in which they all mingled without distinction of rank, age, or sex. Such a spirit of enthusiasm had never been raised by the greatest events. To keep up the zeal of their friends, the company offered to lend large sums on condition of obtaining their charter. Their adversaries made offers still more considerable to get it revoked.

THE two houses of parliament, before whom this cause was heard, declared in favour of the private merchants. They obtained leave to carry on trade to India, either separately or in concert. They entered into an association, and formed a new company. The old one had permission to continue its voyages till the expiration of their charter, which was very near at hand. Thus England had two East India companies at the same time authorised by parliament, instead of one established by royal authority.

THESE two bodies shewed as much zeal for the destruction of each other, as they had shewn for their respective establishment. They had both experienced the advantages of trade; and viewed each other with
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all the jealousy and hatred, which ambition and avarice never fail to inspire. Their dissensions soon broke out with considerable violence in Europe, as well as in India. At last, the two societies made advances towards a reconciliation, and united their funds in 1702. From this period the affairs of the company were carried on with greater propriety, prudence and dignity. The principles of commerce, which were every day better understood in England, had a good effect on their administration, as far as the interests of their monopoly could allow. They made improvements in their former regulations, and formed new ones. They endeavoured to indemnify themselves for the profits they were deprived of by a strong competition, by procuring a larger sale for their commodities. Their privileges were less violently attacked, since they had received the sanction of the laws, and obtained the protection of parliament.

THEIR prosperity was overcast by some transient misfortunes. In 1702 the English had formed a settlement in the island of Pulocondor, which was dependent on Cochin-China. Their design was to take a share in the commerce of this rich kingdom, which had till then been too much neglected. An instance of excessive severity had given disgust to sixteen soldiers of Macassar, who were part of the garrison. On the 3d of March 1705, they set fire in the night to the houses belonging to the fort, and massacred the Europeans as they came to extinguish it. Thirty out of forty-five lost their lives in this manner; the rest were massacred by the natives, who were exasperated at the insolence of these strangers. By this accident the company lost the money their enterprise had cost them, together with the stock of their factories and the prospects they had entertained.

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THE misfortunes they met with at Sumatra in the year 1719 were not attended with the same fatal consequences. This large island had been frequented by the English ever since their arrival in India, but they did not settle there till the year 1688. They drove the Dutch from Bencoolen, a considerable town on the western coast, built near a large and commodious bay; and took possession of it in lieu of them. The conquerors found the islanders inclined to treat with them; and these dispositions were at first improved with prudence. This circumspect behaviour did not last long. The company's agents soon abandoned themselves to that spirit of rapine and tyranny, which the Europeans usually carry with them into Asia. Clouds of discontent between them and the natives of the country began to gather by degrees. Distrust and animosity had risen to the highest pitch, when at the distance of a few miles from the coast, the foundations of a fort were discovered. On seeing this, the inhabitants of Bencoolen took up arms, and were joined by the whole country. All the buildings belonging to the company were instantly reduced to ashes, the English were routed, and obliged to embark with all the effects they could carry off. Their exile was not of long continuance. The fear of their falling again under the dominion of the merciless Dutch, who had a strong force upon the frontier, occasioned them to be recalled. This misfortune procured them the advantage of finishing fort Marlborough without opposition, where they still remain.

THESE disturbances were no sooner appeased, than new ones arose in Malabar and other countries. As the source of them all was in the avarice and turbulent disposition of the company's servants they put an end to them by giving up the unjustifiable pretensions that had occasioned them. Other objects of the most interesting nature soon claimed their attention.

ENGLAND

ENGLAND and France entered into a war in 1744. The whole world became the scene of their operations. In India, as well as in other places, each nation sustained its character. The English, ever animated with the spirit of commerce, attacked and ruined that of their enemies. The French, adhering to their passion for conquest, seized upon the principal settlements belonging to their rival. The event shewed which of the two nations had acted with the greatest prudence. That which attended only to its own aggrandizement, sank into a total inactivity; while the other, though deprived of the center of its power, carried its enterprises to a greater extent.

A CESSATION of hostilities between the two divided nations had no sooner taken place, than they engaged themselves as auxiliaries, in the quarrels of the Indian princes. Soon after they again took arms on their own account. Before the end of this war, the French were driven out of the continent and seas of Asia. At the conclusion of the peace in 1763, the English company found themselves in possession of the power, in Arabia, in the Persian Gulph, on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, and at Bengal.

IN all these countries there is a difference in climate, manners, soil, productions, the spirit of industry, and the price of merchandise. These particulars ought to be exactly and thoroughly understood. We will give a short sketch of them. This description will be found to have a particular connection with the history of a nation which has obtained a remarkable influence in those countries, and derives from thence the greatest advantages.

ARABIA is one of the largest peninsulas in the known world. It is bounded by Syria, Diarbeck and Irac-Arabi on the north, by the Indian Ocean on the south, by the Gulph of Persia on the east, and on the west

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General trade of the Red Sea, and of the English trade there in particular.

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west by the Red Sea, which separates it from Africa. It is commonly divided into three parts; Arabia Petræa, Arabia Deserta, and Arabia Felix, which names denote the nature of the soil in each of these countries.

ARABIA PETRÆA is the most western and the smallest of the three. It is for the most part uncultivated, and almost totally covered with rocks. In Arabia Deserta nothing is to be seen but dry plains, heaps of sand raised and dissipated by the wind, and steep mountains never embellished with verdure. Springs are so rarely found there, that the possession of them is always disputed with the sword. Arabia Felix owes its specious appellation less to its fertility, than to its vicinity to the barren countries that surround it. These different regions, though exposed to great heats, enjoy a sky constantly pure and serene.

ALL histories agree that this country was peopled at a very early period. It is thought that its first inhabitants came from Syria and Chaldea. We cannot find at what period their form of government began; whether their knowledge was derived from India, or whether they acquired it themselves. It appears that their religion was Sabeism even before they were acquainted with the people of Upper Asia. They had conceived sublime ideas of the divinity at an early period: they worshipped the stars as bodies animated by celestial spirits: their religion was neither cruel nor absurd; and though they were liable to those fallies of enthusiasm so common among the southern nations, they do not seem to have been tainted with fanaticism till the time of Mohammed. The inhabitants of Arabia Deserta professed a worship not quite so rational. Many of them worshipped, and some offered human sacrifices to the sun. It is a truth that may be collected from the study of history and the inspection of the globe, that the religious systems in barren countries,
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subject to inundations and volcanos, have ever had a tincture of cruelty, and have always been of a milder cast in countries more favoured by nature. They take their character from the climate where they are formed.

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WHEN Mohammed had established a new religion in his country, it was no difficult task to infuse a spirit of zeal into his followers; and this zeal made them conquerors. They extended their dominion from the western seas to those of China, and from the Canaries to the Molucca islands. They also carried along with them the useful arts, which they improved. The Arabians did not equally succeed in the fine arts; they shewed, indeed, some genius for them, but had not the least idea of that taste with which nature some time after inspired the people who have become their disciples.

PERHAPS genius, which is the offspring of a creative imagination, flourishes in hot countries, which abound with a variety of productions, grand scenes, and surprizing events that excite enthusiasm: while taste, which selects and reaps the produce of the fields that genius has sown, seems rather to belong to people of a sedate, mild, and moderate disposition, who live under the influence of a temperate sky. Perhaps too this same taste, which is the effect of reason refined and matured by time, requires a certain stability in the government, united with a certain freedom of thinking, a gradual improvement of knowledge, which affording a greater scope to genius, enables it to discern more exactly the relation one object has to another, and to combine with happier art those mixed sensations which give the highest entertainment to men of elegant minds. Accordingly the Arabians, who were almost constantly forced into regions disturbed with war and fanaticism, never enjoyed that temperature of government and climate which gives birth to taste.

taste. But they introduced into the countries they conquered sciences which they had pillaged, as it were, in the course of their ravages, and all the arts essential to the prosperity of nations.

No nation at that time understood commerce so well, or carried it to a greater extent. They attended to it even in the course of their conquests. Their merchants, manufactures, and staples, extended from Spain to Tonquin; and other people, at least those in the western part of the world, were indebted to them for arts and sciences, and all articles conducive to the convenience, the preservation, and the pleasures of it.

WHEN the power of the Caliphs began to decline, the Arabians, after the example of several nations they had subdued, threw off the yoke of these princes, and the country re-assumed by degrees its ancient form of government, as well as its primitive manners. At this æra, the nation being, as formerly, divided into tribes, under the conduct of different chiefs, returned to their original character, from which fanaticism and ambition had made them depart.

THE stature of the Arabians is low, their bodies lean, and their voice slender; but they have robust constitutions, brown hair, a swarthy complexion, black sparkling eyes, an ingenuous countenance, but seldom agreeable. This contrasted mixture of features and qualities, which seem incompatible, appear to have been united in this race of men, to constitute a singular nation, whose figure and character partake strongly of that of the Turks, Africans, and Persians, by whom they are surrounded. Grave and serious, they consider their long beards as marks of dignity; they speak little, use no gesture, make no pauses, nor interrupt one another in their conversation. They pique themselves on observing the strictest probity towards each other, which is the effect of that self-love, and that spirit

spirit of patriotism, which, united together, make any nation, clan or society, esteem and prefer themselves to the rest of the world. The more carefully they preserve their phlegmatic character, so much the more formidable is their resentment when once it is raised. These people have abilities, and even a genius for the sciences; yet they cultivate them but little, either from want of assistance, or because they have no occasion for them; chusing rather, no doubt, to suffer natural evils, than the inconvenience of labour. The Arabians, at this time of day, afford no monument of genius, no productions of industry, which intitle them to hold any rank in the history of the human mind.

THEIR ruling passion is jealousy; that torment of impetuous, weak, and indolent minds. It might naturally be asked, whether this distrust was owing to the high or low opinion they entertained of themselves? It is said to be from the Arabians that several nations of Asia, Africa, and even Europe itself, have borrowed those despicable precautions this odious passion prescribes against a sex, which ought to be the guardian, not the slave of our pleasures. As soon as a daughter is born, they unite by a kind of future those parts which nature has separated, leaving just space enough for the natural discharges. As the child grows, the parts by degrees adhere so closely, that when they become marriageable they are obliged to be separated by an incision. Sometimes it is thought sufficient to make use of a ring. The married women, as well as the unmarried, are subjected to this outrage on the virtue of the sex; with this difference only, that the ring worn by the young women cannot be taken off, whereas that of the married women has a kind of padlock, of which the husband keeps the key. This custom, which is known in all parts of Arabia,

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is almost universally adopted in that part that bears the name of Petræa.

SUCH are the manners of the nation in general. The different mode of living among the people who compose it, must necessarily have introduced some peculiarities of character that are worth observing.

THE number of Arabians who inhabit the desert may amount to two millions. They are distributed into several clans, some of which are more populous and considerable than others, but all independent of each other. Their government is simple: an hereditary chief, assisted by a few old men, determines all debates, and punishes the offenders. If he is hospitable, humane, and just, they adore him; if haughty, cruel, and avaricious, they assassinate him, and appoint a successor out of his own family.

THESE people encamp at all seasons of the year. They have no settled abode, and fix at different places where they can be supplied with water, fruits, and pasture. They find an infinite charm in this wandering life, and consider the sedentary Arabs in the light of slaves. They live upon the milk and flesh of their herds. Their habits, tents, cordage, and the carpets they sleep upon, are all made of the wool of their sheep, and the hair of their goats and camels. This is the employment of the women in each family; and there is not a single artist in the whole desert. What they consume in tobacco, coffee, rice, and dates, is purchased with the butter they carry to the frontiers, and by the money arising from the annual sale of twenty thousand camels, at least, at forty-eight livres (2l. 2s.) a head. These animals, so useful in the east, were formerly carried to Syria. Most of them are now sent to Persia, the perpetual wars there having occasioned an extraordinary demand for them, and diminished their species.

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THESE articles not being sufficient to supply the Arabs with what they wanted, they have contrived to raise a contribution on the caravans, which superstition leads to travel through their sandy regions. The most numerous of these, which goes from Damar to Mecca, procures a safe passage by the payment of a hundred purses, or a hundred and fifty thousand livres (6,562l. 10s.) to which the Grand Signior is subjected, and which, by ancient agreement, is distributed among all the hords. The other caravans make similar terms with the hords, through whose territories they are obliged to pass.

INDEPENDENT of this expedient, the Arabs inhabiting the most northern part of the desert have had recourse to plunder. These people, so humane, faithful, and disinterested towards each other, are savage and rapacious in their transactions with foreigners. While they preserve in their tents the character of beneficent and generous hosts, they commit continual depredations in the towns and villages of their neighbourhood. They are good fathers, good husbands, and good masters; but all are enemies who do not belong to their family. They frequently carry their incursions to a great distance; and Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia, are not uncommonly the scenes of their depredations.

THE Arabs, who devote themselves to plunder, form a sort of society with the camels, to carry on trade or war, where the man is to have all the profit, and the animal the principal fatigue. As these two beings are to live together, they are brought up with a view to each other. The Arab trains his camel from its birth, to all the exercises and hardships it is to undergo during the whole course of its life. He accustoms it to travel far, and eat little. The animal is

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early inured to pass its days without drinking, and its nights without sleep. He teaches it to draw up its legs under its belly, while it suffers itself to be laden with burthens, that are insensibly increased as its strength is improved by age and by the habit of bearing fatigue. In this singular plan of education, which princes sometimes adopt the more easily to tame their subjects, in proportion as the labour of the animal is doubled, its subsistence is diminished. The Arabians qualify the camels for expedition, by matches, in which the horse runs against him. The camel, less active and nimble, tires out his rival in a long course. When the master and the camel are ready and equipped for plunder, they set out together, traverse the sandy deserts, and lie in ambush upon the confines to rob the merchant or traveller. The man ravages, massacres, and seizes the prey: and the camel carries the booty. If these adventurers are pursued, they make a precipitate retreat. The master robber mounts his favourite camel, drives the whole troop before him, travels three hundred leagues in eight days without unloading his camels, or allowing them more than an hour each day for rest, or a cake of dough for their subsistence. They sometimes remain the whole time without drinking, unless they happen to see a spring at a little distance from the road, when they redouble their pace, run to the water with eagerness, which makes them take at one draught, as much as is sufficient to quench their present thirst, and serve them to the end of their journey. Such is the animal so often celebrated in the Bible, the Coran, and the eastern romances.

THE Arabs, who live in districts that afford some slender pasture, and where the soil is proper for barley, breed the finest horses in the world. These horses are sent into all parts to improve and multiply the breed of these animals which are every where inferior
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in swiftneſs, beauty, and ſagacity, to thoſe of Arabia. Their owners live with them as with domeſtics, on whoſe ſervice and affection they can rely: and it happens with them as with all other wandering people, thoſe, in particular, who treat animals with kindneſs, that both the men and the animals partake, in ſome meaſure, of each other's manners and diſpoſition. Theſe Arabs are ſimple, mild and docile: and the different religions that have prevailed in theſe countries, and the ſeveral governments of which they have been the ſubjects or tributaries, have produced very little alteration in the character they derive from climate or from habit.

THE Arabs ſettled near the Indian and the Red Sea, and thoſe who inhabit Arabia Felix, were formerly a mild people, fond of liberty, and content with a ſtate of independence, without dreaming of conqueſt. They were too much prejudiced in favour of the beauty of their ſky, and of the ſoil that ſupplied their wants almoſt without culture, to be tempted to extend their dominion over different countries lying in another climate. Mohammed changed their ideas: but they retain no traces of the impreſſions he communicated to them. They paſs their time in ſmoking, taking coffee, opium, and ſherbet. Theſe gratifications are preceded or followed by exquisite perfumes that are burnt before them, the ſmoke of which they receive in their clothes, which are ſlightly ſprinkled with roſe water.

BEFORE the Portugueſe had interrupted the navigation of the Red Sea, the Arabs had more activity. They were the factors of all the trade that paſſed through the channel. Aden, which is ſituated at the moſt ſouthern extremity of Arabia upon the Indian ocean, was the mart in theſe parts. The ſituation of its harbour, which opened an eaſy communication with

Egypt, Ethiopia, India, and Persia, had rendered it, for many ages, one of the most flourishing factories in Asia. Fifteen years after it had repulsed the great Albuquerque, who attempted to demolish it in 1513, it submitted to the Turks, who did not long remain masters of it. The king of Yemen, who possessed the only district in Arabia that merits the title of happy, drove them from thence, and removed the trade to Mocha, a place in his dominions, which till then was only a village.

THIS trade was at first inconsiderable; consisting principally in myrrh, incense, aloes, balm of Mecca, some aromatics and medicinal drugs. These articles, the exportation of which is continually retarded by exorbitant imposts, and does not exceed at present 700,000 livres, (30,625*l.*) were at that time more in repute than they have been since: but must have been always of little consequence. Soon after a great change ensued from the introduction of coffee.

THE coffee-tree is originally a native of upper Ethiopia, where it has been known time immemorial, and is still cultivated with success. M. Lagrenée de Mezieres, one of the most intelligent agents that France ever had in the India service, had some of the fruit in his possession, and has made trial of it. He found it to be larger, rather longer, not so green, and almost as fragrant as that which was first gathered in Arabia towards the close of the fifteenth century.

It is commonly believed, that a Mollach, named Chadely, was the first among the Arabs who made use of Coffee, to relieve himself from a continual drowsiness which hindered him from attending punctually to his nightly devotions. His dervises did the same: and their example was followed by the lawyers. It was soon found out, that this liquor purified the blood by a gentle agitation, dissipated the crudities of the stomach,

stomach, and raised the spirits: and it was adopted even by those who had no occasion to keep themselves awake. It passed from the borders of the Red Sea to Medina and Mecca, and was introduced by the pilgrims into all the Mohammedan countries.

IN these countries where there is less freedom of manners than in ours, where the jealousy of the men and the close confinement of the women make society less lively, it was thought proper to encourage public coffee-houses. Those in Persia soon became infamous, where young Georgian women, dressed like courtezans, acted obscene plays, and prostituted themselves for hire. When these offensive irregularities were suppressed by order of the court, these houses became places of genteel resort for the indolent, and of relaxation for the busy part of the world. The politicians entertained themselves with news, the poets recited their verses, and the Mollachs delivered their sermons, which were usually rewarded with some charitable donations.

AFFAIRS were not in the same peaceable state at Constantinople. The coffee-houses were no sooner opened than they were frequented to excess. People spent their whole time in them. The grand Mufti, concerned to see the Mosques abandoned, pronounced that the infusion of this plant was included in that law of Mohammed, which forbids the use of strong liquors. Government, which frequently aids the superstition of which it is sometimes the dupe, gave immediate orders that the houses which had given such offence to the priests should be shut up; and enjoined the officers of police to put a stop to the use of this liquor in private families. The strong inclination they had for it still prevailed over all these severe regulations. Coffee continued to be drunk, and the places where it was to be had, soon grew more numerous than ever.

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IN the middle of the last century, Kuproli, the Grand Vizir, went in disguise to the principal coffee-houses in Constantinople. He there found a number of mal-contents, who, thinking the affairs of government were in reality the concern of every private person, spoke of them with warmth, and arraigned with great boldness the conduct of the generals and ministers. He then visited the taverns, where wine was sold. They were full of plain people, chiefly soldiers, who, accustomed to consider the interest of the state as those of the prince, for whom they entertained a silent veneration, sung lively songs, talked of their amours, and warlike exploits. These last societies, which are attended with no inconveniencies, he thought ought to be tolerated: but the first he considered as dangerous in an arbitrary state. He therefore suppressed them, and no attempts have since been made to revive them. This regulation, which was confined to the capital of the empire, has not discouraged the use of coffee, and has, perhaps, increased the consumption of it. It is publicly offered to sale in all the streets and markets ready made, and is drunk in every family at least twice a-day. In some it is always ready, it being the custom to offer it to all visitors, and reckoned equally unpolite not to offer it, or to refuse it.

AT the same time that coffee-houses in Constantinople were shut, they were opened in London. This novelty was introduced there in 1652 by a merchant of the name of Edward, who returned from the Levant. The English grew fond of it; and it has since been introduced among all the nations of Europe, but is drank with more moderation than in those climates where religion prohibits the use of wine.

THE tree that produces the coffee grows in the territory of Betelsagui, a town belonging to Yemen, situated

situated upon a dry sand at the distance of ten leagues from the Red Sea. It is cultivated in a district fifty leagues long, and fifteen or twenty broad: the fruit is not every where in equal perfection. That which grows upon high ground is smaller, greener, weighs heavier, and is generally preferred.

It is computed that Arabia contains twelve millions of inhabitants, among whom, in general, coffee constitutes a favourite article in their entertainments. None but the rich citizens have the pleasure of tasting the berry itself. The generality are obliged to content themselves with the shell and the husk of this valuable production. These remains, so much despised, make a liquor of a pretty clear colour, which has the taste of coffee without its bitterness and strength. These articles may be had at a low price at Betelsagui, which is the general market for them. Here likewise is sold all the coffee which comes out of the country by land. The rest is carried to Mocha, which is thirty-five leagues distant, or to the nearer ports of Lohia or Hodeida, from whence it is transported in small vessels to Jodda. The Egyptians fetch it from the last mentioned place, and all other nations from the former.

THE quantity of coffee exported may be estimated at twelve millions five hundred and fifty thousand weight. The European companies take off a million and a half; the Persians three millions and a half; the fleet from Suez six millions and a half; Indostan, the Maldives, and the Arabian colonies on the coast of Africa, fifty thousand; and the Caravans a million.

As the coffee which is bought up by the Caravans and the Europeans, is the best that can be procured, it costs from sixteen to seventeen sols (about $8d.\frac{1}{2}$) a pound. The Persians, who content themselves with that of an inferior quality, pay no more than twelve or thirteen sols (about $6d.\frac{1}{4}$) a pound. The Egyptians

purchase it at the rate of fifteen or sixteen (about 8d.) ; their cargoes being composed partly of good and partly of bad coffee. If we estimate coffee at fourteen sols (about 7d. $\frac{3}{4}$) a pound, which is the mean price, the profits accruing to Arabia from its annual exportation will amount to 8,785,000 livres (384,343l. 15s.) This money does not go into their coffers ; but it enables them to purchase the commodities brought from the foreign markets to their ports of Jodda and Mocha.

MOCHA receives from Abyffinia, sheep, elephants teeth, musk, and slaves. It is supplied from the eastern coast of Africa with gold, slaves, amber, and ivory ; from the Persian Gulph with dates, tobacco, and corn ; from Surat with a vast quantity of coarse, and a few fine linens ; from Bombay and Pondicherry with iron, lead, copper, which are carried thither from Europe ; from Malabar with rice, ginger, pepper, Indian saffron, with coire, cardamom, and also with planks ; from the Maldives with gum benzoin, aloes-wood, and pepper, which these islands take in exchange ; from Coromandel with four or five hundred bales of cottons, chiefly blue. The greatest part of these commodities, which may fetch six millions, (262,500l.) are consumed in the interior part of the country. The rest, particularly the cottons, are disposed of in Abyffinia, Socotora, and the eastern coast of Africa.

NONE of the branches of business which are managed at Mocha, as well as throughout all the country of Yemen, or even at Sanaa, the capital, are in the hands of the natives. The extortions with which they are perpetually threatened by the government, deter them from interfering in them. All the warehouses are occupied by the Banians of Surat or Guzarat, who make a point of returning to their own country as soon as they have made their fortunes. They then resign

relinquish their settlements to merchants of their own nation, who retire in their turn, and are succeeded by others.

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THE European companies, who enjoy the exclusive privilege of trading beyond the Cape of Good Hope, formerly maintained agents at Mocha. Notwithstanding it was stipulated by a solemn capitulation, that the imposts demanded should be rated at two and a quarter per cent. They were subject to frequent extortions: the governor of the place insisting on their making him presents, which enabled him to purchase the favour of the courtiers, or even of the prince himself. However, the profits they obtained by the sale of the European goods, particularly cloths, made them to submit to these repeated humiliations. When these several articles were furnished by Grand Cairo, it was then impossible to withstand the competition, and the fixed settlements were therefore given up.

THE trade was carried on by ships, that sailed from Europe with iron, lead, copper, and silver, sufficient to pay for the coffee they intended to buy. The supercargoes, who had the care of these transactions, settled the accounts every time they returned. These voyages, which at first were pretty numerous and advantageous, have been successively laid aside. The plantations of coffee, made by the European nations in their colonies, have equally lessened the consumption and the price of that which comes from Arabia. In process of time, these voyages did not yield a sufficient profit to answer the high charges of undertaking them on purpose. The companies of England and France then resolved, one of them to send ships from Bombay, and the other from Pondicherry to Mocha, with the merchandise of Europe and India. They even frequently had recourse to a method

method that was less expensive. The English and French who traffic from India to India, visit the Red Sea every year. Though they dispose of their merchandise there to good advantage, they can never take in cargoes from thence for their return. They carry, for a moderate freight, the coffee belonging to the companies who lade the vessels with it, which they dispatch from Malabar and Coromandel to Europe. The Dutch company, who prohibit their servants from fitting out ships, and who send no vessels themselves to the Gulph of Arabia, are deprived of the share they might take in this branch of commerce. They have also given up a much more lucrative branch, that of Jodda.

JODDA is a port situated near the middle of the Gulph of Arabia, twenty leagues from Mecca. The government there is of a mixed kind: the Grand Signior and the Xeriff of Mecca share the authority and the revenue of the customs between them. These imposts are levied upon the Europeans at the rate of eight per cent. and upon other nations at thirteen. They are always paid in merchandise, which the managers oblige the merchants of the country to buy at a very dear rate. The Turks, who have been driven from Aden, Mocha, and every part of the Yemen, would long ago have been expelled from Jodda, if there had not been room to apprehend that they might revenge themselves in such a manner as to put an end to their pilgrimages and commerce.

SURAT sends three ships every year to Jodda, which are laden with linens of all colours, shawls, cotton and silk stuffs, frequently ornamented with gold and silver flowers. The sale of these goods produces 10,000,000 of livres (437,500l.) Two, and more frequently three vessels belonging to the English, sail from Bengal for the same destination. They are

are fitted out by the free merchants of that nation. Formerly their company had concerns there; at present these merchants have no associates but the Armenians. These united cargoes may be estimated at 7,200,000 livres (315,000*l.*) They consist of rice, ginger, saffron, sugar, a few silks, and a considerable quantity of linens which are for the most part ordinary. These vessels, which may enter the Red Sea from the beginning of December till the end of May, find the fleet of Suez at Jodda.

THIS fleet commonly consists of fourteen or fifteen vessels laden with corn, rice and pulse, for the use of Arabia. They carry out for Asia, Venetian glass, coral, and yellow-amber, of which the Indians make necklaces and bracelets. They arrive in October, and return together in February, with 5,500,000 weight of coffee, and with linens or stuffs to the value of 7,000,000 of livres (306,250*l.*) Though they have only two hundred leagues to return to their port, they employ two months in the voyage; being retarded by the north wind, which blows continually in this sea. Their ignorance is such, that though they are accustomed to cast anchor every night, they think themselves fortunate when they lose only one ship in six. If to these losses we add the great expence of equipment, the excessive imposts demanded at Suez, and the unavoidable extortions of a government that oppresses all industry, we shall be convinced that, in the present situation of things, the correspondence between Europe and India by this channel is impracticable.

THE merchandise brought from Surat and Bengal, which the Egyptian fleet does not take off is partly consumed in the country, and bought in great quantities by the caravans, which come every year to Mecca.

THE Arabs had ever entertained an affection for this city. They supposed it to have been the residence of Abraham, and they flocked from all parts to a temple, of which they believed he was the founder. Mohammed, who was a man of too much understanding to attempt to abolish a devotion so generally established, contented himself with rectifying the object of it. He banished the idols from this revered place, and dedicated it to the unity of God. Mohammed was not the messenger of heaven; but he was an acute politician, and a great conqueror. To promote the concourse of strangers to a city which he intended to make the capital of his empire, he commanded that all who embraced his law should once in their lives undertake a pilgrimage thither, on pain of dying reprobates. This precept was accompanied with another, which makes it evident, that he was not guided by superstition alone. He ordered that every pilgrim, of whatever country he was, should purchase five pieces of cotton, and get them consecrated, and made into handkerchiefs for himself, and all the persons belonging to his family who were prevented by reasonable impediments from undertaking this holy expedition.

THIS policy might naturally be expected to make Arabia the center of a prodigious trade, when the number of pilgrims should amount to several millions. This zeal is so much abated, especially on the coast of Africa, in Indostan and Persia, in proportion to the respective distances of those places from Mecca, that the number is reduced to a hundred and fifty thousand; the majority of whom are Turks. They carry away with them seven hundred and fifty thousand pieces of linens; each ten ells in length, exclusive of those which many of them buy for sale. They are encouraged in these mercantile schemes by the advantages they have in crossing the deserts, and in
not

not being exposed to those oppressive tolls which are so destructive in the sea-ports of Suez and Bassora. The money received from these pilgrims and from the fleet, and by the Arabs from the sale of coffee, is expended in India. The vessels from Surat, Malabar, Coromandel, and Bengal, annually carry away 14,400,000 livres (630,000*l.*) and about the eighth part of this sum in merchandise. When these riches are divided among the trading nations of Europe, the English have contrived to appropriate to themselves the most considerable share of them. They have acquired the same superiority in Persia.

THE English nation had scarce been admitted into the empire of the Sophis, when, as we have observed, the Dutch resorted there in great numbers. The trade of these republicans was at first established on a very disadvantageous footing; but being, by the civil wars of England, soon delivered from a rival whose various privileges were not to be overbalanced even by the greatest œconomy, they were in a short time without competitors, and consequently acquired an authority to set what price they thought proper on the commodities they bought or sold. The connections of the Persians with the Dutch were formed on this destructive system; when the return of the English, who were soon after followed by the French, gave a new turn to affairs, and put them upon a more equitable footing.

General
view of the
trade in the
Persian
Gulph, and
that of the
English in
particular.

AT the time when the three nations exerted their utmost efforts to gain the superiority, and these efforts turned to the advantage of the empire, they were harassed with a thousand oppressions, some more unjust and odious than others. The throne was continually filled with tyrannical or weak princes, whose cruelty and injustice weakened the correspondence of their subjects with other nations. One of these tyrants

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tyrants was so savage, that a great man of his court used to say, *That whenever he came out of the king's closet, he clapped both his hands to his head to feel whether it was still upon his shoulders.* When the successor of this tyrant was told that the finest provinces in the empire were invaded by the Turks, he answered coolly, *That their progress gave him very little disturbance, provided they would leave him the city of Ispahan.* The son of the latter was so meanly enslaved to the most frivolous observances of his religion, that he was stiled by way of derision, *Hussein the monk, or priest*: a character less odious, perhaps, in a prince, but much more dangerous to his people, than that of impiety, or defiance of the Gods. Under these despicable sovereigns, merchantile affairs declined every day more and more at Gombroon. The Afghans destroyed them entirely.

THESE are people of Candahar, a mountainous country, lying north of India. They have sometimes been subject to the Moguls, sometimes to the Persians, but more frequently independent. Those that do not reside in the capital live in tents, after the manner of the Tartars. They are of low stature and ill made: but are strong, robust, skilled in the use of the bow, and in horsemanship, and inured to fatigue. Their manner of fighting is singular; a chosen band of soldiers, divided into two parties, fall upon the enemy without any order, only endeavouring to open the way for the army that follows them. As soon as the battle is begun, they fall back upon the flanks and towards the rear-guard, where their business is to prevent any person from giving way. If any soldier attempts to fly, they attack him with their sabres, and compel him to return to his post.

ABOUT the beginning of this century, this fierce people left their mountains, invaded Persia, carried devastation every where, and at length subdued it, after

ter a bloody contest of twenty years. Fanaticism still perpetuates the memory of the horrid outrages which they committed in the course of their conquest. An insatiable zeal for the Turkish superstition, and an unconquerable aversion for the sect of Ali, prompted them to massacre thousands of Persians in cold blood. In the mean time, the provinces they had not entered, were ravaged by the Russians, Turks, and Tartars. Thamas Kouli-Khan drove these robbers out of this country, but shewed himself still more barbarous than they were. His violent death gave rise to new calamities. Anarchy aggravates the cruelties of tyranny. One of the finest empires in the world is become an extensive scene of desolation, and a lasting and shameful monument of that destructive instinct that animates uncivilized people, and is at the same time an inevitable consequence of the evils of despotic government.

DURING this general confusion, the English sales in Persia consisted of no more than a hundred bales of woollen manufactures, two hundred thousand weight of iron, and the same quantity of lead. These articles, taken together, brought them no more than from twelve to thirteen hundred thousand livres (554,687*l.* 10*s.*) paid in money. This languid state of trade determined the company to follow the example of their rivals, and to seek those advantages at Bassora, which they could not obtain at Gombroon.

BASSORA is a large city, built by the Arabs in the height of their prosperity, fifteen leagues below the place where the Tigris and Euphrates meet, and at the same distance from the Persian Gulph, into which these rivers empty themselves. Its inhabitants are computed at fifty thousand; consisting of Arabs, fifteen hundred Armenians, and a smaller number of families of different nations whom the hope of gain has

has attracted. Its territory abounds in rice, fruits, pulse, cotton, and particularly in dates.

THE port of Bassora, as those who first established it foresaw, became a famous mart. The merchandise of Europe was brought thither, by the Euphrates, and that of India by sea. The tyranny of the Portuguese intercepted this communication. It would have been opened again when their power declined, had not this unhappy country continually been the scene of the disputes between the Arabs, the Persians, and the Turks. This last power being in quiet possession of this harbour, have availed themselves of the troubles of their neighbours to renew the trade. The mercantile business, which was before transacted at Gombroon, is at present centered at Bassora, which has recovered its credit and importance.

THIS change has not been effected without difficulty. At first the people of the country would not permit the traders to come out of the river. They foresaw, that if these foreigners were permitted to settle in the city, they would not be so much under their direction, and might lay up in their magazines such of their commodities as they could not sell during one monsoon, with a view of disposing of them with greater advantage at another time. To this maxim, which was the result of an ill judged avarice, were added others arising from superstitious notions. It was deemed a violation of the respect due to religion to permit infidels to inhabit a city, consecrated by the blood of so many martyrs and saints of the Mohammedan persuasion; a prejudice that seemed to have some weight with the government; but these scruples were soon overcome. Pecuniary considerations were offered by the nations, and they were allowed to establish factories, and even to display their respective flags there.

REVOLUTIONS

REVOLUTIONS are so frequent in Asia, that trade cannot possibly be carried on in the same continued track as it is in Europe. These events, joined to the little communication between the different states, either by land or by sea, must naturally occasion great variations in the quantity and value of commodities. Bassora, on account of its great distance from the center of trade, is more exposed to this inconvenience than any other place. However, upon an average, we need not be under any apprehension of departing much from the strictest truth, when we venture to estimate the merchandise annually brought there by way of the Gulph, at twelve millions (525,000*l.*) Of this the English furnish four millions (175,000*l.*) the Dutch two (87,500*l.*) the Moors, Banians, Armenians and Arabs, furnish the remainder.

THE cargoes of these nations consist of rice, sugar, plain, striped and flowered muslins from Bengal, spices from Ceylon and the Molucca islands; coarse, white, and blue cottons from Coromandel; cardamum, pepper, sanders-wood, from Malabar; gold and silver stuffs, turbans, shawls, indigo, from Surat; pearls from Baharen, and coffee from Mocha; iron, lead, and woollen-cloth from Europe. Other articles of less consequence are imported from different places. Some of these commodities are shipped on board small Arabian vessels, but the greater part is brought by European ships, which have the advantage of a considerable freight.

THIS merchandise is sold for ready money; and passes through the hands of the Greeks, Jews, and Armenians. The Banians are employed in changing the coin current at Bassora, for that which is of higher value in India.

THE different commodities collected at Bassora are distributed into three channels. One half of them goes to Persia, whither they are conveyed by the caravans;

are foreigners in any danger, if they take care to carry along with them a person belonging to each of the tribes they may happen to meet with. This road through the desert would be universally preferred to that of Bagdad, on account of safety, expedition, and the advantages of sale, if the Pacha of the province, who has established tolls in different parts of his territory, did not use every possible precaution to hinder this communication. It is only by eluding the vigilance of his deputies, that one can prevail upon the Arabs to carry with them some goods, which will not take up much room.

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BESIDES these exportations, there is a pretty large consumption, especially of coffee, at Bassora, and the territories belonging to it. These articles are paid for in dates, pearls, rose-water, dried fruits, and grain, when that is allowed to be disposed of to foreigners.

THIS trade would be more extensive, if it were freed from the shackles that confine it. But the activity that might be expected from the natives of the country is continually damped by the oppressions they labour under, especially at a distance from the centre of the empire. The foreigners are no less oppressed by governors, who derive from their extortions the advantage of maintaining themselves in their office, and frequently of securing their lives. Were it possible in some measure to assuage this thirst of gold, it would soon be renewed by the rivalry of the European nations, whose sole aim is to supplant one another, and who, to gain their ends scruple not to employ the most execrable expedients. A striking instance of this odious spirit of jealousy happened in 1748.

BARON KNYPHAUSEN managed the Dutch factory at Bassora with extraordinary success. The English found themselves in imminent danger of losing the superiority they had acquired at this place, as well as

in most of the sea-ports in India. The dread of an event which must wound at the same time their interests and their vanity betrayed them into injustice. They excited the Turkish government to suppress a branch of trade that was useful to it, and procured an order for the confiscation of the merchandise and possessions of their rivals.

THE Dutch factor, who under the character of a merchant concealed the statesman, instantly took a resolution worthy of a man of genius. He retired with his dependents and the broken remains of his fortune to Karek, a small island at the distance of fifteen leagues from the mouth of the river: where he fortified himself in such a manner, that by intercepting the Arabian and Indian vessels, bound for the city, he compelled the government to grant him an indemnification for the losses he had sustained by its behaviour. The fame of his integrity and abilities drew to his island the privateers of the neighbouring ports, the very merchants of Bassora and the Europeans who traded thither. The prosperity of this new colony was daily increasing, when it was forsaken by its founder. The successor of this able man did not display the same talents. Towards the end of the year 1765 he suffered himself to be dispossessed of his island by the Arabian Corsair Mirmahana. The Company lost an important post, and more than two millions (87,500*l.*) in artillery, provisions and merchandise.

By this event Bassora was freed from a rivalry that was prejudicial to its interests; but an unforeseen and much more formidable one has succeeded in its room, which is that of Muskat.

MUSKAT is a city in Arabia, situated on the western side of the Persian Gulph. The great Albuquerque made himself master of it in 1507, and ruined its trade, which he wanted to transfer wholly to Ormus. When

When the Portuguese had lost this small kingdom, they were desirous of reviving the trade at Muskat, of which they still kept possession. Their endeavours proved ineffectual; and the merchants bent their course to Gombroon. They dreaded the insolence of the old tyrants of India; and were unwilling to rely upon their fidelity. No vessels entered the harbour except those brought in by the Portuguese themselves. It ceased to be frequented by the ships of every nation, after these imperious masters were driven from it in 1648. Their pride prevailing over their views of interest, made them no longer desirous of going thither: and they had still a sufficient degree of influence to prevent any ships from entering the harbour, or going out of it.

THE decline of their power tempted the inhabitants of Muskat to the same acts of piracy to which they themselves had so long been exposed. They made descents upon the coasts of their ancient oppressors; and the success they met with encouraged them to attack the small Moorish and European vessels that frequented the Persian Gulph. But they were so severely chastised for their plunders by several nations, and especially by the English, that they were obliged to desist. From that period the city sank into a state of obscurity, which was prolonged for a considerable time by intestine broils, and foreign invasions. At length the government assuming a more regular form at Muskat, and in the whole country under the jurisdiction of its Iman, its commerce began to revive about the year 1749.

THE articles of consumption in the country itself are rice, blue linens, iron, lead, sugar, and some spices; the returns for which are made in myrrh, incense, gum-arabic, and a small quantity of silver. This trade, however, would not be considerable enough to invite ships hither, if Muskat, which is situated

situated pretty near the entrance of the Persian Sea, were not an excellent mart for the innermost part of the Gulph. All trading nations begin to give it the preference to Bassora; because it makes their voyage shorter by three months; they are free from any kind of extortion; and imposts are lowered to one and a half per cent. The merchandise, indeed, is afterwards to be carried to Bassora, where it pays a tax of three per cent. but the Arabs sail with so little expence, and have so many methods of eluding the tolls, that they will always find their account in disposing of their goods at Muskat. Besides this, the dates, which are produced at Bassora in greater plenty and perfection than any other article, and are often spoilt on board large vessels that sail slowly, are conveyed with the utmost expedition in light barks to Malabar, and the Red Sea. There is a particular reason which will always determine the English, who trade for themselves, to frequent Muskat. They are there exempted from the five per cent. which they are obliged to pay at Bassora, as well as at all other places where their company have made settlements.

THE company have never attempted to establish themselves on the island of Baharen; which we are at a loss to account for. This island, which lies in the Persian Gulph, has often changed its masters. It fell with Ormus, under the dominion of the Portuguese, and was governed by the same laws. These conquerors were afterwards deprived of it, and it has since undergone a variety of revolutions. Thamas Kouli Khan restored it to Persia, to which it had belonged. This haughty usurper at that time conceived the plan of forming a most extensive empire. He wanted to make himself master of two seas, some coasts of which he already possessed: but finding that his subjects opposed his design instead of favouring it, he had

had recourse to one of those arbitrary acts which tyrants make no scruple of exercising, and transported his subjects in the Persian Gulph to the Caspian Sea, and those in the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulph. He looked upon this double transmigration as the necessary means of breaking the connections which both these people had formed with his enemies, and of securing their fidelity, if he could not engage their attachment. His death put a period to his vast designs : and the confusion into which his empire was thrown, afforded a fair opportunity to an ambitious and enterprizing Arab of taking possession of Baharen, where he still maintains his authority.

THIS island, famous for its pearl fishery even at the time when pearls were found at Ormus, Karek, Keshy, and other places in the Gulph, is now become of much greater consequence ; the other banks having been exhausted, while this has suffered no sensible diminution. The time of fishing begins in April, and ends in October. It is confined to a tract of four or five leagues. The Arabs, who alone follow this employment, pass their nights upon the island or the coast, unless they are prevented by the wind from going on shore. They formerly paid a toll, which was received by the galliots on that station. Since the last alteration, none but the inhabitants of this island pay this acknowledgment to their Scheik, who is not in a condition to demand them from others.

THE pearls taken at Baharen, though not so white as those of Ceylon and Japan, are much larger than those of the former place, and of a more regular shape than those of the latter. They are of a yellowish cast ; but have this recommendation, that they preserve their golden hue ; whereas the whiter kind lose much of their lustre by keeping, particularly in hot countries. The shell of both these species, which is known by

by the name of mother of pearl, is used in Asia for various purposes.

THE annual revenue arising from the fishery in the latitude of Baharen, is computed at 3,600,000 livres (157,500*l.*) The greatest part of the pearls that are uneven, are carried to Constantinople, and other ports of Turkey; where the larger compose part of the ornaments of the head-dress, and the smaller are used in works of embroidery. The perfect pearls must be reserved for Surat, from whence they are distributed throughout all Indostan. The women have so strong a passion for luxury, and the sale of this article is so much increased by superstition, that there is not the least reason to apprehend any diminution either in the price or the demand. There are none of the Gentiles who do not make it a point of religion to bore at least one pearl at the time of their marriage. Whatever may be the mysterious meaning of this custom among a people whose morality and politics are couched in allegories, or where allegory becomes religion; this emblem of virgin modesty has proved advantageous to the pearl trade. The pearls that have not newly been bored make a part of dress; but cannot have a place in the marriage ceremony, where one new pearl is at least indispensable. They are accordingly always sold five and twenty or thirty per cent. cheaper than those which come from the Gulph, where they are taken. There are no pearls at Malabar; but it has riches of another kind.

General
state of the
trade on the
coast of Ma-
labar; and
that of the
English in
particular.

MALABAR is, properly speaking, a country, situated between Cape Comorin and the river of Neticeram. But to make our narrative the better understood, by accommodating it to the notions generally received in Europe, we shall give this name to the whole track extending from the Indus to Cape Comorin, including the adjacent islands, and beginning with the Maldives.

THE

THE Maldives form a long chain of islands to the west of Cape Comorin, which is the nearest part of the Terra Firma. They are divided into thirteen provinces, which are called atollons. This division is the work of nature, that has surrounded each atollon with a barrier of rocks, furnishing a better defence than the strongest fortification against the impetuosity of the waves, or the attacks of an enemy. The natives reckon the number of these islands at twelve thousand; the smallest of which are nothing more than banks of sand that are overflowed at high tides, and the largest very small in circumference. Of all the channels that separate them there are only four capable of receiving ships. The rest are so shallow, that they have seldom more than three feet water. It is conjectured, with probability, that all these different islands were formerly one, and that the force of the waves and currents, or some great natural event, has divided them into several portions.

It is probable, that this Archipelago was originally peopled from Malabar. Afterwards the Arabians went there, usurped the sovereignty, and established their own religion. At length the two nations were united into one; when the Portuguese, soon after their arrival in India, reduced them to subjection. This tyranny was of short continuance. The garrison which held them in slavery was exterminated, and the Maldives recovered their independence. Since this period they have fallen under the yoke of an arbitrary prince, who keeps his court at Male, and has resigned the whole authority to the priests. He is the sole merchant in his dominions.

AN administration of this stamp, and the barrenness of the country, which produces nothing but cocoa-trees, prevents the trade from being considerable. The exports consist only of cowries, fish, and kayar.

KAYAR

KAYAR is the bark of the cocoa-tree, of which cables are made, that serve for the Indian navigation. This is no where so good, and in such plenty as in the Maldives. A great quantity of it is carried, with some cowries to Ceylon, where these commodities are exchanged for the areca nut.

THE fish called in the country complemasse, is dried in the sun. It is salted by dipping it several times in the sea, and cut into pieces of the thickness and length of a man's finger. Cargoes of it are annually brought to Achen, which are purchased with gold and benzoin. The gold remains in the Maldives; and the benzoin is sent to Mocha, where it procures in return about three hundred bales of coffee for the consumption of these islands.

COWRIES are white and shining shells. The inhabitants fish for them twice a month; three days before the new moon, and three days after. This employment belongs to the women, who wade to the middle in water to gather them upon the sands. They are put up in parcels, each containing twelve thousand. Those that are not circulated in the country, or carried to Ceylon are sent to the banks of the Ganges. A great number of vessels annually sail from this river laden with sugar, rice, linen, and other less considerable articles for the use of the Maldives, and return with a cargo of cowries valued at about 700,000 livres (30,625*l.*) One part is circulated in Bengal, where it serves as small coin. The rest is taken off by the Europeans, who use it with advantage in their trade with Africa. They buy it at six sols (about 3*d.*) a pound, and sell it from twelve to eighteen (near 8*d.* on an average) in their several capitals: it is worth thirty-five livres (1*l.* 10*s.* 7*d.* $\frac{1}{2}$) in Guinea.

THE kingdom of Travancor, which extends from Capè Comorin to the frontiers of Cochin, was not formerly

formerly in possession of a greater share of opulence than the Maldives. It is probable that it owed the preservation of its independency to its poverty, when the Moguls made themselves masters of Madura. The father of the present monarch added more dignity to his crown than any of his predecessors. He was a man of great abilities. A neighbouring state had sent him two ambassadors, one of whom began a long harangue, which the other was preparing to continue. *Be not tedious,* said the prince, with an austere brow, *life is short.* This prince formed a small body of troops of the French and Portuguese deserters, which, in time of peace, performed the military duties in the citadel of Kotate, with as much regularity as our garrisons, and were of signal service in enlarging his dominions in time of war. The interior parts of his country were benefited by his conquest, a circumstance that rarely happens. He established in them some manufactories of coarse cottons, which were at first disposed of among the Dutch at Tutocorin, and were afterwards carried to the English factory at Anjengo.

THERE are two European settlements in the kingdom of Travancor: that of the Danes at Kolechey is nothing more than a small storehouse, where they might nevertheless be regularly supplied with two hundred thousand weight of pepper. Such is their indolence, or their poverty, that they have made but one purchase, and that only of a very small quantity these ten years.

THE English factory at Anjengo has four small bastions without ditches, and a garrison of a hundred and fifty black and white men. It is situated on a sandy point of land at the mouth of a small river, which, is three-fourths of the year choaked up with sand. Its village is well peopled, and full of manufactures. This settlement is, in general, more lucrative to the agents of the

the company, who buy pepper, large cinnamon, and very good kayar on their own account, than to the company themselves, who trade only for fifty thousand weight of pepper, and some linens of small value.

COCHIN was a place of great note when the Portuguese arrived in India. They made themselves masters of it, and were afterwards dispossessed by the Dutch. The sovereign, at the time this place was taken from him, had preserved his dominions, which, in the space of twenty-five years, have been repeatedly invaded by the people of Travancor. His misfortunes have obliged him to retire under the walls of his ancient capital, where he lives upon a revenue of 14,400 livres, (630*l.*) which was stipulated to be paid him by ancient capitulations, out of the produce of his customs. In the same suburb is a colony of industrious Jews, who are white men, and ridiculously pretend to have been settled here since the time of the Babylonish captivity, but have certainly been in this situation a very considerable time. A town encompassed with fertile lands, and built upon a river that receives vessels of five hundred tons burthen, and communicates by several navigable branches to the interior parts of the country, may naturally be expected to be in a flourishing condition. If it is otherwise, the blame must lie on the oppressive nature of the government.

THIS oppressive spirit is at least as sensibly felt at Calicut: all nations are admitted thither, but none have any sway. The sovereign who resides there at present is a Bramin. This is almost the only throne in India that is filled by a person of this first class. In other places the crown is worn by the inferior classes; and even by persons of such obscure origin, that their domestics would be dishonoured and banished from their tribes, if they condescended even to eat with their monarchs. These people take care not to
boast

boast of supping with the king : this prejudice is not, perhaps, more ridiculous than any other. It humbles the pride of princes, and deprives courtiers of one source of vanity. Such is the influence of superstition, that it gives rise to the universal prevalence of opinion. By superstition artifice divides the empire with power : when the latter has conquered and enslaved the world, the former interposes and prescribes laws in its turn : they enter into a league with each other, mankind fall prostrate and submit to their chains. Accordingly the Bramins, who are the depositaries of religion and the sciences throughout Indostan, are every where employed by the Rajahs as ministers or secretaries of state, and make what arrangements they think proper ; but affairs are not the better managed on that account.

THE administration of Calicut is bad in general, and that of the capital still worse. No police is established, no fortifications are raised. The trade, which is clogged with a multiplicity of imposts, is almost entirely in the hands of a few of the most abandoned and faithless Moors in Asia. One of its greatest advantages is, that by the river Baypore, which is only at two leagues distance, it has the means of being furnished with teak timber, which grows upon the plains and mountains in great abundance.

THE territories that border upon Calicut, and belong to the house of Colastry, are little known, except by the French colony at Mahé, which is gathering fresh strength, and that of the English at Tellecherry, which has experienced no misfortune. The latter has a fort flanked with four bastions without ditches, a garrison of three hundred Europeans, five hundred sipahis, and to the amount of about fifteen thousand inhabitants. The company to which it belongs

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longs receives from it annually fifteen hundred thousand pounds weight of pepper.

If we except a few principalities that scarce deserve mention, the states we have been describing properly constitute the whole of the Malabar coast, a country more agreeable than opulent. The exports are few, besides aromatics and spices. The principal articles are sanders wood, India saffron, cardamum, ginger, bastard cinnamon, and pepper.

THE santalum or sanders grows to the size of a walnut-tree; the fruit, which in some degree resembles a cherry, is of no value. The wood, which is better in Malabar than in any other place except Kanara, where it grows in still higher perfection, is either red, yellow, or white. From the two last kinds an oil is extracted, with which the Chinese, Indians, Persians, Arabians and Turks anoint their bodies. It is likewise burnt in their houses, and yields a fragrant and wholesome smell. The red sanders is least esteemed, and is scarce ever used but in medicine.

THE Indian saffron, called by the physicians curcuma, is a plant with leaves resembling those of the white hellebore; the flower is of a fine purple colour, and the fruit has, like our chesnuts, a rough coat containing the seed, which is round like a pea. The root, which has a bitter taste, and has long been esteemed of an aperient quality, was formerly used as a remedy for the jaundice. The Indians make a yellow dye of it, and it is an ingredient in most of their dishes.

THE cardamum is a grain generally used in Indian ragouts: it propagates itself without sowing or planting. Nothing more is required than, as soon as the rainy season is over, to set fire to the herb that has produced it. It is often mixed with areca and betel, and sometimes chewed afterwards. The sort most
esteemed,

esteemed, which is small, grows in the territory of Cananor; it is used in medicine chiefly to help digestion, and to strengthen the stomach.

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GINGER is a plant whose root is white, tender, and almost as pungent to the palate as pepper. The Indians put it into their rice, which is their common diet, to correct its natural insipidity. This spice mixed with others, gives the dishes seasoned with it a strong taste, which is extremely disagreeable to strangers. The Europeans, however, who come to Asia in low circumstances are obliged to accustom themselves to it. Others adopt it out of complaisance to their wives, who are generally natives of the country. It is here, as in all other places, much easier for the men to conform to the taste and foibles of the women, than to get the better of them. Perhaps too the climate may require this manner of living.

BASTARD cinnamon, known in Europe by the name of cassia lignea, is to be had at Timor, Java, and Mindanao; but that which grows on the Malabar coast is much superior. The Dutch, despairing of being able to root up all the trees out of the forests that produce it, fell upon the expedient, during their superiority in Malabar of requiring the sovereigns of the country to renounce their right of barking them. This engagement, which was never strictly observed, has been less fulfilled since the nation that made it has lost its authority, and the price of the cinnamon of Ceylon has been advanced in consequence of that measure. The present produce at Malabar may be computed at two hundred thousand weight. The smallest portion of it is brought to Europe, where it is sold for good cinnamon by merchants who are not very honest; the rest is disposed of in India, where it is sold at twenty and from thence to twenty-five sols (from 10d. $\frac{1}{2}$ to about 13d.) a pound, though it costs

no more than six, (about 3d.) The trade is entirely in the hands of the free English merchants; it may admit of improvement, but will never be equal to that of pepper.

THE pepper-plant is a shrub whose root is small, fibrous, and flexible; it rises into a stem, which requires a tree or a prop to support it. Its wood has the same sort of knots as the vine; and when it is dry, it exactly resembles the vine-branch. The leaves, which have a strong smell and a pungent taste, are of an oval shape; but they diminish towards the extremity, and terminate in a point. From the flower-buds, which are white, and are sometimes placed in the middle, and sometimes at the extremity of the branches are produced small berries resembling those of the currant-tree. Each of these contains between twenty and thirty corns of pepper; they are commonly gathered in October, and exposed to the sun seven or eight days. The fruit, which was green at first, and afterwards red, when stripped of its covering, assumes the appearance it has when we see it. The largest, heaviest, and least shrivelled, is the best.

THE pepper-plant flourishes in the islands of Java, Sumatra, and Ceylon, and more particularly on the Malabar coast. It is not sown, but planted; and great nicety is required in the choice of the shoots. It produces no fruit till the end of three years; but bears so plentifully the three succeeding years, that some plants yield between six and seven pounds of pepper. The bark then begins to shrink; and the shrub declines so fast, that in twelve years time it ceases bearing.

THE culture of pepper is not difficult; it is sufficient to plant it in a rich soil, and carefully to pull up the weeds that grow in great abundance round its roots, especially the three first years. As the sun is highly necessary to the growth of the pepper-plant, when

when it is ready to bear, the trees that support it must be lopped, to prevent their shade from injuring the fruit. When the season is over, it is proper to crop the head of the plant. Without this precaution there would be too much wood, and little fruit.

THE pepper exported from Malabar, which was formerly entirely in the hands of the Portuguese, and is at present divided between the Dutch, English, and French, amounts to about ten millions weight. At ten sols a pound ($5d. \frac{1}{4}$) it is worth five millions: (218,750l.) it is exported, with other productions, for half that sum. By the sale of these commodities the country is enabled to purchase rice from the Ganges and Canara, coarse linens from Myfore and Bengal, and several sorts of goods from Europe. The payments in money amount to little or nothing.

KANARA, a country bordering upon Malabar properly so called, was formerly more opulent. It was an almost inexhaustible granary of rice; but has been much on the decline since it submitted to the yoke of Heyder-Aly-Kan. The trade of this country, which was carried on with freedom at Mangalore the capital, is entirely engrossed by the conqueror, who will deliver his commodities to none but those who furnish him with arms, powder and ammunition. The Portuguese are the only people exempted from this law, who having been formerly masters of the province, have always retained one staple which supplies Goa.

THE commerce, that raised Venice from her canals, and Amsterdam from her marshes, had rendered Goa the center of the riches of India, and the most celebrated mart in the world. It is now reduced to nothing, though it is defended by two thousand European soldiers, by a company of artillery, and by five thousand sipahis, and that it is an annual expence to the state of thirteen or fourteen hundred thousand

livres (about 59,100*l.* on an average.) Superstition, the Autos da Fé, and the monks, extinguish all desire of seeing it restored to its former state. Deprived of so many fertile provinces, which implicitly obey its laws, it has nothing remaining but the small island on which it is built, and the two peninsulas that form its harbour.

NEAR a century ago a power was established by sea and land to the north of Goa, the increase of which was not foreseen by any body. The name of the founder of it was Konna Ji Angria. He made himself master of the small island of Severndroog, where he had served as a soldier, and built a light vessel on which he embarked as a pirate. At first he confined his attacks to the Moorish or Indian vessels trading upon that coast. His success, experience, and the number of adventurers whom the fame of his courage and generosity invited to join him, enabled him to engage in the greatest enterprises. By degrees he acquired a dominion extending forty leagues along the sea-coast, or which ran up between twenty and thirty miles in the inland country, according to the natural disposition of the places, and the facility of their being defended. His success and renown were, however, principally owing to his naval operations; which were continued with good fortune by his successors. These pirates being masters of the coast, attacked the flag of all nations without distinction. Besides a great number of small vessels, they took ships of the largest size from the European powers; the Derby and the Restoration belonging to the English, the Jupiter belonging to the French, and three Dutch vessels at one time, one of which carried fifty guns.

THE plans of the English were disconcerted by these depredations. They had viewed with pleasure the first attempts of these pirates, which threw the greatest part of the trade, and the whole navigation into their hands; because their ships were
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of greater force and better manned than those of the country. They could no longer boast this advantage, when the vessels belonging to Bombay, which traded upon the coast, were insulted, cargoes plundered, and the sailors taken prisoners. The precaution taken never to sail without a convoy was very expensive, and proved ineffectual. The convoys were often molested, and sometimes taken. These depredations determined the company in 1722 to join their forces with those of the Portuguese, who were equally exasperated against these pirates; and it was determined between them to destroy the place of their resort. The expedition was disgraceful and abortive. That which was undertaken by the Dutch, two years after with seven men of war and two bomb ketches, met with no better success. At length the Marattas, upon Angria's refusing to pay a tribute which had long been customary, agreed to attack the common enemy by land, whilst the English attacked them by sea. This confederacy obtained a complete conquest. Most of the harbours and forts were taken in the campaign of 1755. Gerialah, the capital surrendered the year following, and with it fell a power whose prosperity had been only founded on public calamities. By its ruin the power of the Marattas, which was formidable already, was unhappily increased.

THESE people, who had been long confined within the limits of their mountains, have by degrees extended themselves towards the sea, and at present possess the large space between Surat and Goa, where they equally threaten these two cities. They are famous for their incursions and depredations on the coast of Coromandel, the neighbourhood of Delhi, and on the banks of the Ganges; but the center of their greatest strength, and their fixed station is at Malabar. That spirit of rapine, which they carry into the countries where they occasionally make inroads, is forsaken in

the provinces they have conquered. One may venture to foretell that Bacaim, Chaul, Dabul, and many other places, which were so long oppressed by the tyranny of the Portuguese, will regain their former importance under the government of the Marattas. The fate of Surat is an object of still greater consequence.

THIS town was for a long time the only seaport for the exportation of the manufactures of the Mogul empire, and the importation of whatever was necessary to supply its consumption. To secure its allegiance, and provide for its defence, a citadel was built, the commandant of which had no authority over that of the town; care was even taken to chuse two governors, who, from their character, were not likely to unite in oppressing trade. Some disagreeable circumstances gave rise to a third power. The Indian seas were infested with pirates who interrupted the navigation, and hindered devout Mussulmen from making voyages to Mecca. The emperor thought the chief of a colony of Coffrees, who were settled at Rajapour, would be a proper person to stop the progress of these depredations, and therefore appointed him his admiral. Three lacks of rousees, or 720,000 livres, (between 30,000*l.* and 40,000*l.*) were assigned him for his annual pay. This salary not being punctually paid, the admiral seized the castle, and from that fortress laid the town under contribution. A scene of general confusion ensued; and the avarice of the Marattas, which was always active, became more eager than ever. These Barbarians, who had extended their usurpations even to the gates of the place, had, for a long time, been allowed a third part of the duties, on condition that they should not molest the inland trade. They contented themselves with this contribution, so long as fortune did not throw more considerable advantages in their way. As soon as they perceived this

ferment

ferment among the citizens, not doubting that one of the parties might be transported so far by resentment as to open the gates to them, they drew their forces near to the walls. The traders finding their effects daily in danger of being plundered, called the English to their assistance in 1759, and aided them in taking the citadel. The court of Delhi confirmed them in the possession of it, and in the exercise of the naval command, together with the appointments annexed to both commissions. This revolution restored tranquillity to Surat; but Bombay, which was the cause of it, acquired an addition of credit, wealth, and power.

THIS small island, which is not more than twenty miles in circumference, was, for a long time, of little service to the English. No man chose to settle in a country, so unhealthy, as to give rise to the proverb, *That at Bombay a man's life did not exceed two monsoons*: the unwholesomeness of the air was attributed to the bad quality of the water, the low marshy grounds, and to the offensive smell of the fish used in manuring the roots of trees. Every possible remedy was used to remove these causes of mortality. The number of inhabitants in the colony increased in proportion as these destructive principles were diminished: it is computed to amount at present to fifty thousand Indians, born in the island, or induced to settle there by the lenity of the government. Of these, some are employed in the cultivation of rice, a greater number in that of cocoa-trees which cover the plains, and the rest are engaged in navigation and other useful labours, which are continually improving.

BOMBAY was at first considered in no other light than that of an excellent harbour, which in time of peace served as a place of refreshment for the merchant-men frequenting the Malabar coast; and time of war, as a winter station for the squadrons that govern-

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vernment might send to India. This was a very valuable advantage in seas where there are so few good bays, and where the English have no other but this. The settlement has since been rendered much more useful. The company have made it the mart of all their trade with Malabar, Surat, and the Persian and Arabian Gulphs. Its situation has invited the English merchants to resort thither; and by their means trade is carried on with greater spirit. The tyranny exercised by the Angrias upon the continent has compelled some of the Banians to take refuge at Bombay, notwithstanding the aversion these people, who never drink spirituous liquors, must have for living in a place where the water is so bad. Some rich Moors have likewise removed hither in consequence of the disturbances at Surat.

It is not to be imagined, that such a number of men, who, with the advantages of industry and large capitals, were intent on amassing wealth, would remain inactive. From Malabar they furnished themselves with ship timber, and kayar for cordage: these were worked up by the Parsees from Guzarat. The sailors of the country, under the command of European officers, have been found able to navigate their ships. Surat furnishes the cargoes, partly on its own account, and partly on account of the merchants of Bombay. They send out annually two ships to Bassora, one for Jodda, one for Mocha, and sometimes one for China. The cargoes of all these ships are immensely rich. Other vessels of less consequence are dispatched from the colony itself.

THE private ships of the company are destined for the factories they have established between Surat and Cape Comorin. The rupees of Bombay, which have been substituted instead of those at Surat throughout the coast, and in the interior parts of the country,

give

give the company an advantage of five per cent. over all the nations that are their rivals. They likewise send cargoes to Bassora, Bender-Abassi, and Sindi, where the sale of their cloths is the principal object of their settlements. Thirteen or fourteen hundred bales are sufficient to supply the consumption. Their connections with Surat are still more advantageous ; this place buys of them a large quantity of iron and lead, and some woollen-cloths ; the ships are freighted back from hence with manufactures to a great amount.

THE ships sent from Europe formerly sailed to the sea-port, where they were to take in their lading. They now put in at Bombay. This alteration owes its rise to the advantage the company have of transporting hither all the merchandise of the country without expence, since they have been invested with the dignity of admiral to the great Mogul, and in consequence of this appointment have been obliged to maintain a maritime force upon the coast.

THE detail into which we have entered, may incline the reader to suppose that the situation of the English at Malabar is equal to their wishes. It is nevertheless certain that they gain no more than 2,250,000 livres (not quite 100,000*l*.) from all the settlements they have upon this coast ; whereas their annual expences exceed 6,000,000 (above 260,000*l*.)

IF the attention of the company had not been diverted by the great scenes in which they have been engaged on the coast of Coromandel and in Bengal, it is natural to believe their affairs would be in a better state at Malabar.

THE fortifications at Bombay would not have been enlarged, then reduced, then extended again, and in short altered at several different times. Had the plans been drawn by skilful engineers, and executed by honest workmen, those enormous expences, which have excited

excited such a general indignation, might have been avoided.

THEY would have sent from the Ganges, or from Europe, a fund sufficient to purchase seven or eight rich cargoes every year, instead of three or four very slender ones furnished by a declining and almost deserted trade.

THE feeble state of the independent kingdoms of this continent, particularly towards the south, and the anarchy and war in which they are perpetually involved, would have suggested a plan conducive to the welfare of the inhabitants, and to the interests of the nation, by whose influence it would have been procured.

IN a word, the company might have obtained the island of Salsette, which was offered to them by the Marattas, on condition of their assisting them, on a sudden emergency, with five hundred men against the subah of the Decan: and by this arrangement they would have freed themselves from the shameful necessity they are under of depending upon these people for subsistence.

THE fertile island of Salsette, which is twenty-six miles in length, and eight or nine in breadth, was taken by the Marattas from the Portuguese. Masters of this post, they threatened Bombay, which is only separated from it by a narrow channel fordable at low water. Now that the English have raised large fortifications, and placed a numerous garrison in their colony, which is become of greater importance, an invasion is impracticable. The Marattas themselves are convinced of it; but they think it is in their power to ruin this settlement even without attacking it. This, they affirm, would easily be done by refusing to furnish it with provisions from Salsette, and preventing its procuring them from the continent. Persons of observation, who are well acquainted with the situation of the places, find something more than probability in these ideas.

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THE truth is, that ever since that wrong step was taken, though perhaps it was unavoidable, of putting into the hands of the Marattas all the ports which belonged to the Angrias, those barbarians have been daily augmenting their marine. Their ambition will increase with their power; and it is impossible that in process of time, their claims and those of the English should not interfere.

IF we might hazard a conjecture, we should not scruple to prophesy that the company's agents will be the authors of the rupture. Beside the propensity to raise disturbances, which is common to all that set of men, because confusion is favourable to their avaricious views: they are devoured with secret spleen at having no share in those immense fortunes, which are made on the Coromandel coast, and especially in Bengal. Their avarice, jealousy, and even their pride will incline them to represent the Marattas as turbulent neighbours, always intent upon the invasion of Bombay: to magnify the facility of dispersing these banditti, provided they have a proper force; and to give exaggerated ideas of the advantage of plundering their mountains filled with the treasures of Indostan, which they have been accumulating during a whole century. The company accustomed to conquest, and having no longer any urgent occasion for its troops on the banks of the Ganges, will adopt a plan that promises an accession of riches, glory, and power. If those who dread the spirit of ambition, should prevail with the company not to embark in this new enterprize, it will be forced into it by its servants; and however the event of this war may operate upon its interests, those who involve the company in it will be sure to be gainers. There is less reason to fear a misfortune of this kind on the coasts of Coromandel and Orissa, which extend from Cape Comorin to the Ganges.

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GEOGRAPHERS and historians always consider these as distinct countries inhabited by two nations, whose language, genius, and manners have not the least resemblance. But as the commerce in both is nearly the same, and carried on in the same manner; we shall comprehend them both under the general name of Coromandel. The two coasts resemble each other in other respects. In both of them, there reigns from the beginning of May to the end of October an excessive heat, which begins at nine in the morning, and continues till nine in the evening. During the night it is always allayed by a sea-breeze, that blows from the south-east; and most commonly this refreshing gale begins at three in the afternoon. The air is less inflamed, though too hot the rest of the year. It rains almost continually during the months of November and December. This immense tract is covered with a parched sand for the extent of two miles, and sometimes only one mile.

THERE were many reasons why this country was at first neglected by the Europeans who came to India. It was separated by inaccessible mountains from Malabar, where these bold navigators endeavoured to settle themselves. Spices and aromatics, which were the principal objects of their attention, were not to be found there. In short, civil dissensions had banished from it tranquillity, security and industry.

AT that period, the empire of Bijnagar, to which this vast country was subject, was falling to ruin. The first monarchs of that illustrious state owed their power to their abilities. They headed their armies in war; in peace, they directed their councils, visited their provinces, and administered justice. Prosperity corrupted them. By degrees they fell into a habit of withdrawing themselves from the sight of their people, and of leaving the cares of government to their generals

nerals and ministers. This conduct paved the way to their ruin. The governors of Visapour, the Carnatic, Golconda, and Orixá, threw off their dependence, and assumed the title of kings. Those of Madura, Tanjore, Mysore, Gingi, and some others, likewise usurped the sovereign authority, but retained their ancient stile of Naick. This great revolution had just happened, when the Europeans appeared upon the coast of Coromandel.

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THE foreign trade was at that time inconsiderable; it consisted only of diamonds from Golconda, which were carried to Calicut and Surat, and from thence to Ormus or Suez, whence they were circulated through Europe and Asia. Massulipatan, the richest and most populous city in these countries, was the only market that was known for linens; they were purchased at a great fair annually holden there by the Arabian and Malayan vessels that frequented that bay, and by caravans that arrived from distant parts. The linens were exported to the same places as the diamonds.

THE fondness for the manufactures of Coromandel, which began to prevail here, inspired all the European nations trading to the Indian seas with the resolution of forming settlements there. They were not discouraged either by the difficulty of conveying goods from the inland parts of the country, where there was no navigable river; by the total want of harbours, where the sea, at one season of the year, is not navigable; by the barrenness of the coasts for the most part uncultivated and uninhabited; nor by the tyranny and fluctuating state of the government. They thought that silver would be industriously sought after; that Pegu would furnish timber for building, and Bengal corn for subsistence; that a prosperous voyage of nine months would be more than sufficient to complete their loadings; and that, by fortifying themselves, they should

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should be secure against the attacks of the weak tyrants that oppressed these countries.

THE first colonies were established near the shore. Some of them obtained a settlement by force: most of them were formed with the consent of the sovereigns, and all were confined to a very narrow tract of land. The boundaries of each were marked out by a hedge of thorny plants, which was their only defence. In process of time fortifications were raised; and the security derived from them, added to the lenity of the government, soon increased the number of colonists. The splendor and independence of these settlements several times raised the jealousy of the princes in whose dominions they were formed; but their attempts to demolish them proved abortive. Each colony increased in prosperity in proportion to the riches and the wisdom of the nation that founded it.

NONE of the companies that exercised an exclusive privilege beyond the Cape of Good Hope had any concern in the trade of diamonds; which was always left to private merchants, and by degrees fell intirely into the hands of the English, or the Jews and Armenians that lived under their protection. At present this grand object of luxury and industry is much reduced. The revolutions that have happened in Indostan have prevented people from resorting to these rich mines; and the anarchy into which this unhappy country is plunged, leaves no room to hope that they will be again attended to. The whole of the commercial operations on the coast of Coromandel is confined to the purchase of cottons.

THE manufacturing of the white cottons bought there, differs so little from that of ours, that it would be neither interesting nor instructive to enter into a minute description of it. The process used in making their printed cottons, which was at first servilely followed

lowed in Europe, has since been rendered more simple and brought to greater perfection by our manufacturers. The painted cottons, which are likewise bought there, we have not yet attempted to imitate. Those who imagine we have been prevented from undertaking this branch merely by the high price of labour among us, are mistaken. Nature has not given us the wild fruits and drugs necessary for the composition of those bright and indelible colours, which constitute the principal merit of the Indian manufactures; nor has she furnished us with the waters that serve to fix them; and which are good at Pondicherry, but excellent at Madras Paliacaten, Massulipatan, and Bimilipatan.

THE Indians do not universally observe the same method in painting their cottons; either because there are some niceties peculiar to certain provinces, or because different soils produce different drugs for the same uses.

WE should tire the patience of our readers, were we to trace the slow and painful progress of the Indians in the art of painting their cottons. It is natural to believe that they owe it to length of time, rather than to the fertility of their genius. What seems to authorize this conjecture is, that they have stopped in their improvements, and have not advanced a single step in the arts for many ages; whereas we have proceeded with amazing rapidity, and view with an emulation full of confidence, the immense space that still lies between us and the goal. Indeed, were we to consider only the want of invention in the Indians, we should be tempted to believe that, from time immemorial, they had received the arts they cultivate from some more industrious nation: but when it is remembered that these arts have a peculiar dependence on the materials, gums, colours, and productions of India, we cannot but be convinced that they are natives of that country.

It may appear somewhat surprizing that cottons painted with all colours should be sold at so moderate a price, that they are almost as cheap as those which have only two or three. But it must be observed that the merchants of the country sell to all the companies, a large quantity of cottons at a time; and that the demand for cottons painted with various colours makes but a small article in their assortments, as they are not much esteemed in Europe.

THOUGH cottons of all sorts are in some degree manufactured throughout the whole country of Indostan, which extends from Cape Comorin to the banks of the Ganges; it is observable, that the fine sorts are made in the eastern part, the common ones in the center, and the coarse ones in the most western parts. Manufactures are established in the European colonies, and upon the coast: they are more frequent at the distance of five or six leagues from the sea, where cotton is more cultivated, and provisions are cheaper. The purchases made there are carried thirty or forty leagues further into the country. The Indian merchants settled in our factories have always the management of this business.

THE quantity and quality of the goods wanted are settled with these people: the price is fixed according to the patterns: and, at the time the contract is made, a third or a fourth part of the money agreed for is advanced. This arrangement is owing to the necessity these merchants themselves lie under of advancing money to the workmen by the partners or agents who are dispersed through the whole country; of keeping a watchful eye upon them for fear of losing what they have advanced; and of gradually lessening the sum by calling for the cottons as fast as they are worked off. Without these precautions, nothing could be depended upon in an oppressive government, where the weaver

weaver cannot work on his own account, either because his circumstances will not permit, or because he dares not venture to discover them for fear of exactions.

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THE companies that have either success or good management constantly keep the stock of one year in advance in their settlements. By this method they are sure of having the quantity of goods they have occasion for, and of the quality they chuse, at the most convenient time: not to mention that their workmen, and their merchants, who are kept in constant employment, never leave them.

THOSE nations that want money and credit cannot begin their mercantile operations till the arrival of their ships. They have only five or six months, at most, to execute the orders sent from Europe. The goods are manufactured and examined in haste; and they are even obliged to take such as are known to be bad, and would be rejected at any other time. The necessity they are under of completing their cargoes, and fitting out their vessels before the hurricanes come on, allow no time for nicety of inspection.

IT would be a mistake to imagine that the country agents could be prevailed upon to order goods to be made on their account, in hopes of selling them with a reasonable advantage to the company in whose service they are engaged. For besides that the generality of them are not rich enough to embark in so large an undertaking, they would not be certain of finding their account in it. If the company that employ them should be hindered by unforeseen accidents from sending the usual number of ships, these merchants would have no vent for their commodities. The Indians, the form of whose dress requires different breadths and lengths from those of the cottons fabricated for our use, would not purchase them; and the
other

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other European companies would be provided, or certain of being provided with whatever the extent of their trade required, and their money enabled them to purchase. The plan of procuring loans, which was contrived to remedy this inconvenience, never has been, or can be useful.

It has been a custom, time immemorial, in Indostan, for every citizen who borrows money to give a written instrument to his creditor. This deed is of no force in a court of judicature, unless it be signed by three witnesses, and bears the day of the month, and the year when it was made, with the rate of interest agreed upon by the parties. If the borrower fails to fulfil his engagements, he may be arrested by the lender himself. He is never imprisoned, because there is no fear of his making his escape. He would not even eat without obtaining leave of his creditor.

THE Indians make a threefold division of interest; one of which is vice, another neither vice nor virtue, and a third virtue: this is their manner of expression. The interest that is vice, is four per cent. a month; and the interest that is neither vice nor virtue, is two; the interest that is virtue, one. The last is, in their opinion, an act of beneficence that only belongs to the most heroic minds. Yet though the Europeans who are forced to borrow meet with this treatment, it is plain they cannot avail themselves of the indulgence without involving themselves in ruin.

THE foreign trade of Coromandel is not in the hands of the natives. In the western part, indeed, there are Mohammedans, known by the name of Chalias, who, at Naour and Porto-Nuovo, send out ships to Achen, Merguy, Siam, and the eastern coast. Besides vessels of considerable burden employed in these voyages, they have smaller embarkations for the coasting trade for Ceylon, and the pearl fishery. The

Indians

Indians of Massulipatan turn their attention another way. They import white callicoes from Bengal, which they dye or print, and sell them again at the places from whence they had them, at thirty-five or forty per cent. advantage.

EXCEPTING these transactions, which are of very little consequence, the whole trade is vested in the Europeans, who have no partners but a few Banians and Armenians settled in their colonies. The quantity of callicoes exported from Coromandel to the different sea-ports in India, may be computed at three thousand five hundred bales. Of these the French carry eight hundred to Malabar, Mocha, and the isle of France; the English twelve hundred to Bombay, Malabar, Sumatra, and the Philippine Islands; and the Dutch fifteen hundred to their several settlements. Except five hundred bales destined for Manilla, each of the value of 2,400 livres, (about 100 guineas) the others are of so ordinary a kind that they do not exceed 720 livres (about 30 guineas) at prime cost: so that the whole number of three thousand five hundred bales does not amount to more than 3,360,000 livres (not quite 50,000*l*.)

COROMANDEL furnishes Europe with nine thousand five hundred bales; eight hundred of which are brought by the Danes; two thousand five hundred by the French; three thousand by the English; and three thousand two hundred by the Dutch. A considerable part of these callicoes is dyed blue, or striped with red and blue for the African trade. The others are fine muslins, printed callicoes, and handkerchiefs from Massulipatan, or Paliacate. It is proved by experience, that one with another, each bale, in the nine thousand five hundred, costs only 960 livres, (42*l*.) consequently they ought to bring in to the manufactory where they are wrought 8,160,000 livres (near 360,000*l*.)

THE payments are not entirely made in specie either in Europe or Asia; we give in exchange, cloths, iron, lead, copper, coral, and some other articles of less value. On the other hand, Asia pays with spices, pepper, rice, sugar, corn, and dates. All these articles taken together, may amount to 4,800,000 livres (about 210,000*l.*) From this calculation it follows, that Coromandel receives 6,720,000 livres (near 300,000*l.*) in money.

THE English, who have acquired the same superiority upon this coast that they have elsewhere, have formed on it several settlements. In 1757, they took possession of Madura, a considerable town, and tolerably well fortified: but they did not fix there with any commercial views. The cottons calculated for the eastern part of Asia, and for Africa, which are manufactured in the kingdom of which Madura is the capital, are, for the most part, carried to the Dutch factories on the coast of the pearl fishery. The only use the English make of this acquisition is to raise from it a revenue sufficient to overbalance the expences that are unavoidably incurred there.

TRICHINOPOLY, though totally destroyed by the cruel wars it has sustained, is of much more importance to them. This strong post is the key of Tanjore, Mysore, and Madura, and gives them great influence in those three states.

It was solely with the view of securing an easy communication with this celebrated fortress, that they seized upon Devi-Cottah in 1749, whose territory is no more than three miles in circumference. There is no kind of manufacture carried on, either upon the spot, or in the neighbourhood, the only produce being some wood, and a little rice. The defence of this factory costs about 40,000 livres (about 1,800*l.*); an expence that takes away the whole profits of it. It would,

would, notwithstanding, be a post of importance, if what has been advanced by some intelligent men be true, that the Coleroon might, at an easy expence, be put into a condition to receive the largest vessels. The coast of Coromandel would not then be without harbours; and the nation, masters of the only port in those parts, would have powerful means of improving their commerce, which their rivals would be deprived of.

IN 1686, the English purchased Cudalore, with a territory extending eight miles along the coast, and four miles into the interior part of the country. This acquisition, which they obtained of an Indian prince for the sum of 742,500 livres, (about 32,000*l.*) was confirmed to them by the Moguls, who soon after made themselves masters of the Carnatic. Considering afterwards, that the fortress, which they found ready built, was more than a mile from the sea, and that the reinforcements destined for it might be intercepted; they built fort St. David within cannon shot of it, at the mouth of a river, and on the verge of the Indian Ocean. Since that three hamlets have been erected, which, with the town and fortress, are computed to contain sixty thousand souls. Their employment is dying blue, or painting the cottons that come from the inland parts of the country, and manufacturing the finest dimities in the world, to the amount of 1,500,000 livres (about 60,000*l.*) The plundering of this settlement by the French in 1758, and the demolishing of its fortifications, have done it no lasting injury. Its spirit seems rather increased, though St. David has not been rebuilt, and Cudalore is only put into a condition of making a tolerable resistance. A revenue of 144,000 livres (about 6,300*l.*) defrays all the expences of this settlement. Masulipatan affords advantages of another kind.

THIS town, which passed from the hands of the French into those of the English in 1759, is by no means what it was when the Europeans, at the conclusion of the fifteenth century, doubled the Cape of Good Hope. There are but few cottons made or sold there, which, notwithstanding their beauty, cannot furnish any considerable branch of export. Accordingly the new possessors consider their conquest not so much as a market for buying, as for selling large quantities of goods. By means of the caravans which come from very distant places to furnish themselves with salt; and by the intercourse they have formed with the inland parts of the country; they have contrived to establish a demand for their cloths in the most remote countries of the Decan, and this trade is likely to flourish still more. To this may be added the further advantage of drawing a revenue from the product of the salt, and that of the customs, amounting to 1,320,000 livres (near 58,000*l.*) of which 600,000 livres (little more than 26,000*l.*) only are annually expended upon the settlement.

VIZAGAPATAN is a small town, with a little territory belonging to it, and not four thousand inhabitants. Being situated between Maffulipatan and Ganjam, it receives all the fine cottons that are made in that part of Orixá, amounting to five or six hundred bales, which cost 480,000 livres (about 21,000*l.*)

THE merchandise procured from all these places and from a few subordinate factories that vary according to circumstances, is carried to Madrás, which is the center of all the English transactions on the coast of Coromandel.

THIS town was built a hundred years ago by William Langhorne, in the country of Arcot, and by the sea-side. As he placed it in the midst of a sandy tract, altogether dry, and where there was no water fit for drinking, but what was fetched from the distance of
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more than a mile, people were curious to know what reasons could have determined him to make so bad a choice. His friends pretended that his view was to draw thither all the trade of St. Thomas, which has actually been the consequence, while his enemies imputed it to a desire of continuing in the neighbourhood of a mistress he had in that Portuguese colony. This settlement has increased so much since its first establishment, that it has been divided into three districts. The first of these, known in Europe by the name of Fort St. George, and in India by that of the White Town, is occupied by four or five hundred English, men, women, and children. It is defended only by a slight wall, and four ill-constructed bastions. To the north lies the Black Town, which is larger, and still worse fortified; and is the quarter where the Jews, Armenians, Moors, and the richest Indians reside. Beyond this are the suburbs, which are entirely defenceless, and full of inhabitants. The three divisions of which the place is composed, two hamlets which lie at a small distance from it, and the whole territory, which is not more than fifteen miles in circumference, contain two hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, almost all of them natives of India.

AMONG this vast number, there are but few weavers. Fifteen thousand artists are employed in printing and painting the fine callicoes that are worn in Europe; and a considerable quantity of common cottons destined for the different sea-ports of Asia, particularly for the Philippine islands. There are perhaps, forty thousand people occupied in arranging and selling coral and glass ware, with which the women in the interior parts of the country adorn their hair, or make necklaces and bracelets. Other branches of industry inseparable from a large mart, employ a great number of hands. The inhabitants, who have deservedly

servedly gained the confidence of the company, travel through Arcot and the neighbouring country, to buy what goods they have occasion for. The most considerable among them lend money to the English merchants, who, though not of the company, have liberty to traffic in the different sea-ports of Asia; they enter into partnership with them, or embark on their vessels goods for their own private account. The business carried on by the company and the private merchants taken together, has made Madras one of the most opulent and important places in India.

BESIDES the profits accruing to the English from the cottons they purchase in this town, and from the cloths and other merchandise they vend there, the customs, the duties upon tobacco and betel, and some other imposts, bring in a revenue of 1,200,000 livres (above 52,000*l.* sterling.) The continuation of these advantages is secured by a garrison of a thousand Europeans, and of fifteen or eighteen hundred sipahis.

SUCH is the situation of the English company on the coast of Coromandel, considered merely as a mercantile body. Let us now examine it in a political light.

IN 1751, the English undertook to make Mohammed-Ali-Khan nabob of Arcot. The execution of this great plan was attended with innumerable difficulties, which were at length surmounted, after a series of battles, defeats, victories and negociations, that lasted several years. The new sovereign, who had still many enemies remaining, committed the safety of his person to the care of his protectors, by fixing his residence at Madras; and placed his provinces under the cover of their arms, leaving to them the sole charge of defending them. To enable them to support the burden they had undertaken, and to reimburse them for the money they had advanced, it was stipulated, that they should enjoy the revenues of the country,

country, which in times of the greatest prosperity amounted to 12,000,000 livres (525,000*l.*) and are still at least 8,400,000 (near 368,000*l.*) It is true we ought previously to deduct 2,880,000 (126,000*l.*) for public expences, and as much more for their maintenance of the nabob; but there still remain 2,640,000 livres (116,000*l.*) clear income to the company. By this management they keep the Carnatic, which is the most industrious country in this immense tract, in a state of absolute dependence.

To strengthen their influence still more on these coasts, the English had long meditated a plan of making a large acquisition of territory in the neighbourhood of Massulipatan. In 1767 they succeeded so far as to procure, from the subah of the Decan, the cession of the provinces of Candavir, Elur, Montafanagar, Rajamandry and Chicacol. From this prodigious accession of revenue and territory, they were induced to think that the only employment they should have, would be to enjoy the advantages of their situation; when they observed a storm coming upon them, which might possibly endanger, if not totally destroy their prosperity.

HYDER-ALI-KHAN, a soldier of fortune, who had learned the art of war from the Europeans, had made great conquests, and rendered himself master of Mysore. Relying upon his strength and his reputation, he summoned the subah of the Decan, and the nabob of the Carnatic to join with him in driving the English out of Coromandel, threatening, if they refused, to ravage all their provinces. The company thought both their credit and interest concerned in anticipating the designs of an enemy who announced his resentment and projects in so high a strain, and they sent out an army against him in March 1767.

COLONEL WOOD, who had the command of it marched forward with confidence; when to his great astonishment

astonishment he beheld, in front, an army that he found punctually paid, and excellently well disciplined, consisting of thirty thousand foot and twenty thousand horse, with a considerable train of artillery. The war was carried on by artifice, a circumstance very desirable to Hyder, whose genius was subtle and fruitful in stratagems. He contrived to surprize his enemies in their camp, and carry off their provisions and baggage; he seized their best posts by procuring the most exact intelligence, drove their troops before him, vanquished, disheartened, and made them almost ready to revolt for want of pay; and at last alarmed them with the apprehension of seeing their capital besieged, plundered, and destroyed. The panic was becoming universal, when some timely succours arrived, which enabled the English general to regain his ground. On the 4th of October 1768, he found means to compel the Indians to a general engagement, which they had hitherto seemed desirous to avoid. This was, perhaps, the most obstinate and bloody engagement that had ever happened in this part of the world. At last, Wood remained master of the field where both sides had fought so bravely; but this was all the advantage he gained by his victory.

HYDER, though defeated, kept up a menacing countenance, and was still formidable. Terms of accommodation were proposed to him. He listened to them with no small indifference; and it was not without much negotiation, nor, if some accounts may be believed, without considerable presents that he was prevailed upon to conclude a peace after having carried on the war for two years. This prince continues to be considered by the English rather as an enemy, against whom it is necessary they should be constantly on their guard, than as an ally on whom they may depend. Some of the most judicious among them are even of opinion, that unless their

their nation by some means or other gets rid of a neighbour too ambitious and too active for its repose, it cannot securely rely on the power which a combination of fortunate circumstances has given it on the coast of Coromandel. Let us take a view of its situation in Bengal.

BENGAL is a vast country of Asia, bounded by the kingdom of Asham and Arracan on the east; by several provinces belonging to the Great Mogul on the west; by frightful rocks on the north, and by the sea on the south. It extends on both sides the Ganges, which rises from different sources in Thibet, and after several windings through Caucasus, penetrates into India, across the mountains on its frontier. This river, after having formed in its course a great number of large, fertile, and well peopled islands, discharges itself into the sea, by several mouths, of which only two are known and frequented.

TOWARDS the source of this river, was formerly a city called Palibothra. Its antiquity was so great, that Diodorus Siculus makes no scruple of assuring us that it was built by that Hercules, to whom the Greeks ascribed all the great and surprizing actions that had been performed in the world. In Pliny's time, its opulence was celebrated through the whole universe; and it was looked upon as the general mart for the people inhabiting both sides of the river that washed its walls.

THE history of the revolutions that have happened in Bengal, is intermixed with so many fables, that it does not deserve our attention. All we can discover, is, that the extent of this empire has been sometimes greater and sometimes less; that it has had fortunate and unfortunate periods; and that it has alternately been formed into one single kingdom, or divided into several independent states. It was under the dominion

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of one master, when a more powerful tyrant Akbar, grandfather of Aurengzebe, undertook the conquest of it; which was begun in 1590, and completed in 1595. Since this æra Bengal has always acknowledged the Mogul for its sovereign. At first, the governor to whom the administration of it was entrusted, held his court at Raja-mahul, but afterwards removed it to Dacca. Ever since the year 1718, it has been fixed at Muxadavad, a large inland town two leagues distant from Cassimbuzar. There are several Nabobs and Rajahs subordinate to this viceroy, who is called subah.

THIS important post was occupied for a long time by the sons of the Great Mogul: but they so frequently misemployed the forces and treasure at their disposal, to raise disturbances in the empire, that it was thought proper to commit that province to men who had less influence, and were more dependent.

True it is, the new governors gave no alarm to the court of Delhi; but they were far from being punctual in remitting the tribute they collected to the royal treasury. These abuses gained further ground after the expedition of Kouli Khan; and matters were carried so far, that the emperor, who was unable to pay the Marattas what he owed them, authorised them, in 1740, to collect it in Bengal themselves. These banditti, to the number of two hundred thousand, divided themselves into three armies, ravaged this fine country for ten years together, and did not leave it till they had extorted immense sums.

DURING all these commotions, despotic government, which unhappily prevails all over India, maintained its influence in Bengal; though a small district in the province that had preserved its independence, still continues to preserve it. This fortunate spot, which extends about a hundred and sixty miles, is called Bissenpour. It has been governed time immemorial

monial by a Bramin family of the tribe of Rajahputs. Here the purity and equity of the antient political system of the Indians is found unadulterated. This singular government, the finest and most striking monument in the world, has, till now, been beheld with too much indifference. We have no remains of ancient nations but brass and marble, which speak only to imagination and conjecture, those uncertain interpreters of manners and customs that no longer exist. Were a philosopher transported to Bissenpour, he would immediately be a witness of the life led by the first inhabitants of India many thousand years ago; he would converse with them; he would trace the progress of this nation celebrated as it were from its very infancy; he would see the rise of a government, which being founded in happy prejudices, in a simplicity and purity of manners in the mild temper of the people, and the integrity of the chieftains, has survived those innumerable systems of legislation, which have made only a transitory appearance upon the stage of the world with the generations they were destined to torment. More solid and durable than those political structures, which, raised by imposture and enthusiasm, are the scourges of human kind, and are doomed to perish with the foolish opinions that gave them birth, the government of Bissenpour, the offspring of a just attention to order and the laws of nature, has been established and maintained upon unchangeable principles, and has undergone no more alteration than those principles themselves. The singular situation of this country has preserved to the inhabitants their primitive happiness and the gentleness of their character, by securing them from the danger of being conquered, or of imbruing their hands in the blood of their fellow-creatures. Nature has surrounded them with water; and they need only open the sluices of their rivers to overflow the whole country. The armies sent

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to subdue them have so frequently been drowned, that the plan of enslaving them has been laid aside; and the projectors of it have thought proper to content themselves with an appearance of submission.

LIBERTY and property are sacred in Bissenpour. Robbery, either public or private, is never heard of. As soon as any stranger enters the territory he comes under the protection of the laws, which provide for his security. He is furnished with guides at free cost, who conduct him from place to place, and are answerable for his person and effects. When he changes his conductors, the new ones deliver to those they relieve an attestation of their conduct, which is registered and afterwards sent to the Raja. All the time he remains in the country he is maintained and conveyed with his merchandise, at the expence of the state, unless he desires leave to stay longer than three days in the same place. In that case he is obliged to defray his own expences, unless he is detained by any disorder, or other unavoidable accident. This beneficence to strangers is the consequence of the warmth with which the citizens enter into each other's interests. They are so far from being guilty of an injury to each other, that whoever finds a purse, or other thing of value, hangs it upon the first tree he meets with, and informs the nearest guard, who give notice of it to the public by beat of drum. These maxims of probity are so generally received, that they direct even the operations of government. Out of between seven and eight millions (about 330,000l. on an average) it annually receives without injury to agriculture or trade, what is not wanted to supply the unavoidable expences of the state, is laid out in improvements. The Raja is enabled to engage in these humane employments, as he pays the Moguls only what tribute, and at what times, he thinks proper.

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THOUGH the rest of Bengal is far from enjoying the same happiness, it is nevertheless the richest and most populous province in the whole empire. Besides its own consumption, which is necessarily considerable, its exports are immense. One part of its merchandise is carried into the inland country. Thibet takes off a quantity of its cottons, besides some iron and cloths of European manufacture. The inhabitants of those mountains fetch them from Patna themselves, and give musk and rhubarb in exchange.

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RHUBARB, which begins to be cultivated with success in the highlands of Scotland, is not, as is commonly believed, a creeping plant; but grows in tufts at some distance from each other. There is no occasion to sow it, as the seed naturally falls to the ground, and produces a new plant.

MUSK is a production peculiar to Thibet. It is contained in a small bag of the size of a hen's egg, which grows in the shape of a bladder under the belly of a species of goat, between the navel and the genitals. In its original state it is nothing more than putrid blood which coagulates in this bag. The largest bladder yields no more than half an ounce of musk. The smell of it is naturally so strong, that, for common use, it is necessary to moderate it by mixing it with milder perfumes. The hunters, with a view of increasing their profits, contrived to take away part of the musk from the bladders, and to fill the vacuity with the liver and coagulated blood of the animal mixed together. The government, to put a stop to these fraudulent mixtures, ordered, that all the bladders, before they were sewed up, should be examined by inspectors, who should close them with their own hands, and seal them with the royal signet. This precaution has put a stop to the frauds practised to reduce the quality of the musk, but not to those which are calculated

calculated to increase the weight of it; they contrive to open the bags artfully and pour particles of lead into them.

THE trade of Thibet is nothing in comparison of that which Bengal carries on with Agra, Delhi, and the provinces adjacent to those superb capitals, in salt, sugar, opium, silk, silk-stuffs, and an infinite quantity of cottons, particularly muslins. These articles, taken together, amounted formerly to more than forty millions a year (1,750,000*l.*) So considerable a sum was not conveyed to the banks of the Ganges; but it was the means of retaining one nearly equal, which must have issued from thence to pay the duties, or for other purposes. Since the viceroys of the Mogul have made themselves nearly independent, and send him no revenues but such as they chuse to allow him, the luxury of the court is greatly abated, and the trade we have been speaking of is no longer so considerable.

THE maritime trade of Bengal managed by the natives of the country, has not suffered the same diminution, nor was it ever so extensive, as the other. It may be divided into two branches, of which Catek is in possession of the greater part.

CATEK is a district of some extent, a little below the most western mouth of the Ganges. Balasore, situated upon a navigable river, serves it for a port. The navigation to the Maldives, which the English and French have been obliged to abandon on account of the climate, is carried on entirely from this road. Here they load their vessels with rice, coarse cottons, and some silk-stuffs for these islands, and receive cowries in exchange, which are used for money in Bengal, and are sold to the Europeans.

THE inhabitants of Catek, and some other people of the Lower Ganges, maintain a considerable correspondence with the country of Asham. This kingdom, which

which is thought to have formerly made a part of Bengal, and is only divided from it by a river that falls into the Ganges, deserves to be better known, if what is asserted be true, that gun-powder has been discovered there, and that it was communicated from Asham to Pegu, and from Pegu to China. Its gold, silver, iron and lead mines would have added to its fame, if they had been properly worked. In the midst of these riches, which were of very little service to this kingdom, salt was an article of which the inhabitants were so much in want, that they were reduced to the expedient of procuring it from a decoction of certain plants.

In the beginning of the present century, some Brahmins of Bengal carried their superstitions to Asham, where the people were so happy as to be guided solely by the dictates of natural religion. The priests persuaded them, that it would be more agreeable to Brahma if they substituted the pure and wholesome salt of the sea to that which they used. The sovereign consented to this, on condition that the exclusive trade should be in his hands; that it should only be brought by the people of Bengal, and that the boats laden with it should stop at the frontiers of his dominions. Thus have all these false religions been introduced by the influence and for the advantage of the priests who teach, and of the kings who admit them. Since this arrangement has taken place, forty vessels from 5 to 600 tons burden each are annually sent from the Ganges to Asham laden with salt, which yields two hundred per cent. profit. They receive in payment a small quantity of gold and silver, ivory, musk, eagle-wood, gumlac, and a large quantity of silk.

THIS silk, which is singular in its kind, requires no trouble; it is found on the trees where the silk-worms are produced, nourished, and undergo their several metamorphoses.

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metamorphoses. The inhabitants have no other trouble but that of collecting it. The neglected cods produce a new generation; during the growth of which, the tree puts forth new leaves, which serve successively for the nourishment of the young worms. These revolutions are repeated twelve times in a year, but do not produce so much in the rainy as in the dry seasons. The stuffs made of this silk have a great deal of lustre, but do not last long.

EXCEPTING these two branches of maritime trade, which for particular reasons, have been confined to the natives of that country, all the rest of the vessels sent from the Ganges to the different sea-ports of India belong to the Europeans, and are built at Pegu.

PEGU is a country situated on the Gulph of Bengal, between the kingdoms of Arracan and Siam. Revolutions, which are so common in all the despotic empires of Asia, have been here more frequently repeated than in any other. It has alternately been the center of a great power, and a province to several states less extensive than itself. It is at present dependent upon Ava.

THE only port of Pegu that is open to strangers is Syriam. The Portuguese, during their prosperity, were long in possession of it, and it was then in great repute. At present it is scarce frequented but by the Europeans settled on the coast of Coromandel and Bengal. The latter can only sell there some coarse cottons, nor would they visit it at all, except for the building or refitting of their ships; for which purpose they are furnished with all necessary materials (except iron and cordage) of an excellent quality, and at a moderate price. Since the disgust taken at the high rate of ship-building at Surat, Syriam is become a kind of general dock-yard for all vessels employed in the country trade.

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THEIR exports consist of teak timber, wax, ivory, some calin, and an excellent oil for the preservation of ships. The finest topazes, sapphires, amethysts, and rubies, in the world, come from Pegu. They are seldom to be met with at Syriam, nor can they be had without resorting to the court, which is kept at Ava. The Armenians have for some time had such an ascendent, that they make the trade difficult to the Europeans, and even to the English, who are the only people that have formed a settlement at Pegu.

A STILL more considerable branch of commerce, which the Europeans at Bengal carry on with the rest of India, is that of opium. Opium is the produce of a species of poppy, whose root is nearly as large as a man's finger, abounding, as well as the rest of the plant, with a bitter juice. The stem, which is commonly pliable, and sometimes rather hairy, is two cubits high, and produces leaves resembling those of the lettuce, oblong, indented, curled, and of a sea-green colour. Its flower is in the form of a rose. When the poppy is full of sap, a slight incision is made at the top, from whence distil some drops of a milky liquor, which is left to congeal, and is afterwards gathered. This operation is repeated three times, but the produce gradually diminishes in quantity, nor is it of so good a quality. When the opium is gathered, it is moistened and kneaded with water or honey, till it acquires the consistence, viscosity, and glossiness of pitch when it is well prepared, and is then made into small cakes. That which is rather soft, and yields to the touch, is inflammable, of a blackish-brown colour, and has a strong foetid smell, is esteemed the best; on the contrary, that which is dry, friable, burnt, and mixed with earth and sand, is thought good for nothing. According to the different manner of preparing it, and the doses in which it is

given, it stupifies, excites agreeable ideas, or occasions madness.

PATNA, situated on the Upper Ganges, is the most celebrated place in the world for the cultivation of opium. The fields are covered with it. Besides what is carried into the inland parts, there are annually three or four thousand chests exported, each weighing three hundred pounds. It sells upon the spot at the rate of five or six hundred livres (between 24*l.* and 25*l.* on an average) a chest. This opium is not purified like that of Syria and Persia, which we make use of in Europe; it is only a paste that has undergone no preparation, and has not a tenth part of the virtue of purified opium.

AN excessive fondness for opium prevails in all the countries to the east of India. The Chinese emperors have suppressed it in their dominions, by condemning to the flames every vessel that imports this species of poison, and every house that receives it. On the Malayan coast, at Borneo, the Moluccas, Java, Macassar, and Sumatra, the consumption is incredible. These people smoke it with their tobacco. Those who are going to perform some desperate action intoxicate themselves with this smoke. They then encounter indiscriminately every thing they meet; and rush with impetuosity upon the enemy, through the most imminent danger. The Dutch, who are in possession of almost all the places where opium makes the greatest havoc, have been more intent on the profits arising from the sale of this article, than touched with compassion for its numerous victims. Rather than prohibit the use of it, they have authorized individuals to massacre all those who, being disordered with opium, appear in the streets armed. Thus it is that some systems of legislation introduce and keep up intoxicating and violent passions and opinions; and when once these have prevailed among the people, nothing but death or tortures can put an end to them.

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THE Dutch company formerly carried on the trade of opium in their settlements. They vended but little, because four hundred per cent. was gained by smuggling it. In 1743, they resigned this branch to a particular society, to which they deliver a certain quantity of opium at a fixed price. The gains of this society, which consists of the principal members of the government of Batavia, are immense; no one venturing to expose himself to their resentment by pursuing a contraband trade incompatible with their interests. The coast of Malacca, and part of the island of Sumatra, are supplied with opium by the free English merchants, who gain more by this merchandise than by the common cottons they bring to these different markets.

THE Dutch also send rice and sugar to the coast of Coromandel, for which they are paid in specie, unless they have the good fortune to meet with some foreign merchandise at a cheap rate. They send out one or two vessels laden with rice, cottons and silk; the rice is sold in Ceylon, the cottons at Malabar, and the silk at Surat; from whence they bring back cotton, which is usefully employed in the coarser manufactures of Bengal. Two or three ships laden with rice, gum-lac, and cotton stuffs are sent to Bassora, and return with dried fruits, rose-water, and a quantity of gold. The rich merchandise carried to Arabia is paid for intirely in gold and silver. The trade of the Ganges with the other sea-ports of India brings twenty eight millions (1,225,000*l.*) annually into Bengal.

THOUGH this trade passes through the hands of the Europeans, and is carried on under their protection, it is not intirely on their own account. The Moguls, indeed, who are usually satisfied with the places they hold under the government; have seldom any concern in these expeditions; but the Armenians, who,

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since the revolutions in Persia, are settled upon the banks of the Ganges, to which they formerly only made voyages, readily throw their capitals into this trade. The Indians employ still larger sums in it. The impossibility of enjoying their fortunes under an oppressive government, does not deter the natives of this country from labouring incessantly to increase them. As they would run too great a risque by engaging openly in trade, they are obliged to have recourse to clandestine methods. As soon as an European arrives, the Gentoos, who know mankind better than is commonly supposed, study his character: and if they find him frugal, active and well informed, offer to act as his brokers and cashiers, and lend or procure him money upon bottomry, or at interest. This interest, which is usually nine per cent. at least, is higher, when he is under a necessity of borrowing of the Cheyks.

THESE Cheyks are a powerful family of Indians, who have, time immemorial, inhabited the banks of the Ganges. Their riches have long ago procured them the management of the bank belonging to the court, the farming of the public revenue, and the direction of the money, which they coin afresh every year, in order to receive annually the benefit arising from the mint. By uniting so many advantages, they are enabled to lend the government, forty, (1,750,000l.) sixty, (2,625,000l.) or even a hundred millions (4,375,000l.) at a time. When the government finds it impossible to refund the money, they are allowed to indemnify themselves by oppressing the people. That so prodigious a capital should be preserved in the center of tyranny, and in the midst of revolutions, appears incredible. It is not possible to conceive how such a structure could be raised, much less how it could be supported for so long a time. To explain this

this mystery it must be observed, that this family has always maintained a superior influence at the court of Delhi; that the Nabobs and Rajahs in Bengal are dependent upon it; that those who are about the person of the subah have constantly been its creatures; and that the subah himself has been maintained or dethroned by the intrigues of this family. To this we may add, that the different branches of it, and the wealth belonging to them being dispersed, it has never been possible to ruin above one half of the family at a time, which would still have left them more resources than were necessary to enable them to pursue their revenge to the utmost. The Europeans who frequent the Ganges have not been sufficiently alarmed at this despotism, which ought to have prevented them submitting to a dependence upon the Cheyks. They have fallen into the snare, by borrowing considerable sums of these avaricious financiers, apparently at nine, but in reality at thirteen per cent. if we take into the account the difference between the money that is lent them, and that in which they are obliged to make their payments. The engagements entered into by the French and Dutch companies have been kept within some bounds; but those of the English company have been unlimited. In 1755 they were indebted to the Cheyks about eight and twenty millions (1,225,000l.)

SUCH is the conduct of this considerable set of men, who are sole managers of the European trade at Bengal. The Portuguese, who first frequented this rich country, had the wisdom to establish themselves at Chatigan, a port situated upon the frontier of Arracan, not far from the most eastern branch of the Ganges. The Dutch, who, without incurring the resentment of an enemy at that time so formidable, were desirous of sharing in their good fortune, were engaged in searching for a port, which, without obstructing their plan,

plan, would expose them the least to hostilities. In 1603, their attention was directed to Balasore; and all the companies, rather through imitation than in consequence of any well concerted schemes, followed their example. Experience taught them the propriety of fixing as near as possible to the markets from whence they had their merchandise; and they sailed up that branch of the Ganges, which separating itself from the main river at Mourcha above Cassimbuzar, falls into the sea near Balasore under the name of the river Hughly. The government of the country permitted them to erect warehouses wherever there was plenty of manufactures, and to fortify themselves upon this river.

THE first town that is met with in passing up the river is Calcutta, the principal settlement of the English company. The air here is unhealthy, the water brackish, the anchorage not very safe, and the neighbouring country affords but few manufactures. Notwithstanding these inconveniences, great numbers of rich Armenian, Moorish, and India merchants, invited by the prospect of liberty and security, have fixed their residence here. The people have multiplied in proportion through a territory of three or four leagues in circumference, of which the company are the sole sovereigns. The fortress has this advantage, that the vessels bound to the European settlements are obliged to pass under its cannon.

Six leagues higher is situated Frederic Nagore founded by the Danes in 1756, in order to supply the place of an ancient settlement, where they could not maintain their ground. This new establishment has not yet acquired any importance, and there is all the reason imaginable to believe, that it will never become considerable.

CHANDERNAGORE, which lies two leagues and an half higher, belongs to the French. It has the disadvantage

vantage of being somewhat exposed on the western side; but its harbour is excellent, and the air is as pure as it can be on the banks of the Ganges. Whenever any building is undertaken that requires strength, it must here, as well as in all other parts of Bengal, be built upon piles: it being impossible to dig three or four feet deep without coming at water. This district, which is hardly a league in circumference, has been crowded with manufacturers ever since the invasion of the Marattas obliged the natives of the country to retire hither for refuge. Here is a large manufacture of handkerchiefs, and striped muslins; which have, indeed, rather degenerated since their removal. This active spirit of industry has not, however, made Chandernagore the rival of Calcutta, whose immense riches enable it to undertake the most extensive commercial enterprizes.

At the distance of a mile from Chandernagore, is Chinsura, better known by the name of Dougli, being situated near the suburbs of that antiently renowned city. The Dutch have no other possessions there, but merely their fort; the territory round it, depending on the government of the country, which hath frequently made it feel its power by its extortions. Another inconvenience attending this settlement is a sand-bank that prevents ships from coming up to it; they proceed no further than Tulta, which is twenty miles below Calcutta, and this of course occasions an additional expence of the government.

THE Portuguese had formerly made Bandel, which is eighty leagues from the mouth of the Ganges, and a quarter of a league above the Hughly, the principal seat of their commerce. Their flag is still displayed, and there are a few unhappy wretches remaining there, who have forgotten their country after having been forgotten by it. This factory has no other employment

ment than that of supplying the Moors and the Dutch with mistresses.

EXCEPT in the months of October, November, and December, when the frequent and almost continued hurricanes render the Gulph of Bengal impracticable, European ships may enter the Ganges during the remainder of the year. Those that design to go up the river, previously touch at Point Palmiras, where they are received by Pilots of their own nation who reside at Balasore. The money they convey is put on board some sloops of between sixty and a hundred tons belonging to the harbour, which always precede the ships. The passage into the river Hughly lies through a narrow strait between two sand-banks. The ships used formerly to come to an anchor at Culpy, but time has worn off the dread of those currents, quicksands, and shoals that seemed to choke up the navigation of the river, and the ships have been brought up to their respective places of destination. This boldness has occasioned many shipwrecks; but in proportion as more experience has been gained, and the spirit of observation has been carried further, accidents of that kind have been less frequent. It is to be hoped that the example of admiral Watson, who sailed as high as Chandernagore in a seventy-gun ship, will not be forgotten; as a proper attention to it would save a great deal of time, trouble and expence.

BESIDES this great channel, there is another by which goods may be brought from the places which furnish them to the principal settlement of each company. For this purpose a number of small fleets are employed, consisting of eighty or a hundred vessels, and sometimes more. These are manned with black or white soldiers, in order to check the insatiable avarice of the Nabobs and Rajas they meet with in their passage. The goods purchased in the higher parts of the

the Ganges, at Patna and Cassimbuzar, are carried down the river Hughly: those purchased near the other branches of the Ganges, which are all navigable in the interior parts of the country, and communicate with each other, especially towards the lower division of that river, are conveyed into the Hughly by Rangafoula and Batatola, about fifteen or twenty leagues from the sea. From thence they are carried up the stream to the principal settlement belonging to each nation.

THE exports from Bengal to Europe consist of musk, gum-lac, nicaragua wood, pepper, cowries, and some other articles of less importance brought thither from other places. Those that are the immediate produce of the country are borax, salt-petre, silk, silk-stuffs, muslins and several different sorts of cottons.

THE borax which is found in the province of Patna, is a saline substance, which the chymist in Europe have in vain attempted to counterfeit. Some of them take it for an alkaline salt, which is found completely formed in the rich country of Indostan; others will have it to be the produce of volcanoes, or subterraneous fires.

BE this as it may, the borax is of great use in the working of metals by facilitating their fusion and purification. This substance being quickly vitrified by the action of fire, attracts the heterogeneous particles that are intermixed with these metals, and reduces them to dross. The borax is likewise absolutely necessary in the assaying of mines, and the soldering of metals. The Dutch alone have the secret of refining it, which is said to have been communicated to them by some Venetian families that came to seek that liberty in the united provinces which they did not enjoy under the tyranny of their own aristocratical government.

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SALTPETRE is likewise the produce of Patna. It is extracted from a clay, which is either black, whitish or red. The manner of refining it is by digging a large pit, in which the nitrous earth is deposited, and diluted with a quantity of water, which is kept stirred till it comes to a consistency. The water having drawn out all the salts, and the grosser parts subsiding at the bottom, the more fluid particles are taken out and put into another pit not so large as the former. This substance having undergone a second purification, the clear water that swims on the top, and is totally impregnated with nitre, is taken off, and boiled in caldrons; it is skimmed while it is boiling, and, in a few hours, a nitrous salt is obtained infinitely superior to any that is found elsewhere. The Europeans export about ten millions of pounds for the use of their settlements in Asia, or for home consumption in their respective countries. It is bought upon the spot for three shillings (1d. $\frac{1}{2}$) a pound, at the most, and is sold again to us for ten (5d.) at the least.

CASSIMBUZAR, which is grown rich by the ruin of Malda and Rajamahaly is the general market for Bengal silk, the greatest part of which is supplied from that territory. The silk-worms are brought up and fed there in the same manner as in other places; but the heat of the climate hatches them and brings them to perfection at all times of the year. A great quantity of silk and cotton stuffs are manufactured here, which are circulated through part of Asia: those that are made entirely of silk, are for the most part carried to Delhi. They are prohibited in France; and throughout the north of Europe, the consumption in these articles is almost entirely confined to a few armozees, and a prodigious number of handkerchiefs. As for the unwrought silk, the quantity consumed in the European manufactures may be estimated at three
or

or four hundred thousand pounds weight. It is in general of a very inferior quality, ill twisted, and takes no gloss in dying. It is of little use except for the woof in brocades; and is sold upon the spot from 272 to 288 livres (from 11l. 18s. to 12l. 12s.) a quintal. The companies that have a capital, and industry and skill sufficient to twist it in their own warehouses, obtain it at a cheaper rate.

It would be a tedious and useless task to enumerate all the places where ticken and cottons, fit for table linen, or intended to be worn plain, painted or printed, are manufactured. It will be sufficient to mention Dacca, which may be looked upon as the general mart of Bengal, where the greatest variety of finest cottons are to be met with, and in the greatest abundance.

THIS town is situated in twenty-four degrees north latitude. The fertility of its soil, and the advantages of its situation have long since made it the center of an extensive commerce. The courts of Delhi and Muxadavad are furnished from thence with the cottons wanted for their own consumption. They each of them maintain an agent on the spot to superintend the manufacture of them; who has an authority independent of the magistrate over the brokers, weavers, embroiderers, and all the workmen, whose business has any relation to the object of his commission. These unhappy people are forbidden, under pecuniary and corporal penalties, to sell to any person whatever a piece exceeding the value of 72 livres (three guineas): nor can they, but by dint of money, relieve themselves from this oppression.

In this, as in all the other markets, the European companies treat with Moorish brokers settled upon the spot, and appointed by the government. They likewise lend their name to the individuals of their own

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own nation as well as to Indians and Armenians living in their settlements, who, without this precaution, would infallibly be plundered. The Moors themselves, in their private transactions, frequently avail themselves of the same pretence, that they may pay only two instead of five per cent.

A DISTINCTION is observed, in their contracts, between the cottons that are bespoke, and those which the weaver ventures, in some places, to manufacture upon his own account. The length, the number of threads, and the price of the former are fixed: nothing further than the commission for the latter is stipulated, because it is impossible to enter into the same detail. Those nations that make a point of having fine goods, take proper measures, that they may be enabled to advance money to their workmen at the beginning of the year. The weavers, who in general have but little employment at that time, perform their work with less hurry than in the months of October, November and December, when the demand is pressing.

SOME of the cottons are delivered unbleached, and others half bleached. It were to be wished, that this custom might be altered. It is very common to see cottons, that look very beautiful, go off in the bleaching. Perhaps the manufacturers and brokers forget how they will turn out: but the Europeans have not so exquisite a touch, nor such an experienced eye as to discern this. It is a circumstance peculiar to India, that cottons, of what kind soever they are, can never be well bleached and prepared but in the place where they are manufactured. If they have the misfortune to get damaged before they are shipped for Europe, they must be sent back to the places from whence they came.

AMONG

AMONG the cottons purchased at Dacca, the plain striped and worked muslins are, beyond all comparison, of the greatest importance. Bengal is the sole country in India where they are made, as it produces the only cotton proper for that manufacture. It is planted at the end of October, and gathered in February; when it is prepared with all expedition, that it may be ready, for the loom in the months of May, June, and July. This is the rainy season; and as the cotton shrinks more, and is less apt to break at this time, it is therefore the fittest for the purpose of manufacturing muslins. The artists who work at other seasons of the year, give the cotton its requisite degree of moistness, by dipping the part immediately under the warp into water. In this sense we are to understand what is said of fabricating muslins in water.

To whatever degree of fineness these cottons have been brought, it is certain it falls very short of the perfection of which they are capable. The practice of the government in obliging the best manufacturers to work on its account, in paying them ill, and keeping them in a state of captivity, makes them afraid of displaying too much skill. A prevailing spirit of restraint and rigour stifles industry, which though the daughter of necessity, is at the same time the companion of liberty.

THE courts of Delhi and Muxadavad lay no great stress upon the embroidered work wrought upon muslins: and the people of the country, the Moors, Patans, and Armenians, who give large orders, follow their example, and take them as they find them. This indifference hinders the progress of the art of embroidery. The Europeans agree for embroideries as they do for muslins and other merchandise, with brokers authorized by the government, to which they pay an annual contribution for this exclusive privilege.

These

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These agents assign to the women the pieces designed for low embroidery, and those in chain-work to the men. The Europeans frequently content themselves with Indian patterns; at other times they send patterns for stripes and embroideries.

THE sum total of the purchases in Bengal by the European nations amounted, a few years ago, to no more than twenty millions of livres (above 870,000*l.*) One third of this sum was paid in iron, lead, copper, woollens, and Dutch spices: the remainder was discharged in money. Since the English have made themselves masters of this rich country, its exports have been increased, and its imports diminished, because the conquerors have carried away a greater quantity of merchandise, and pay for it out of the revenues they receive from the country. There is reason to believe, that this revolution in the trade of Bengal has not arrived at its crisis, and that sooner or later it will be attended with more important consequences and effects.

English settlement at
St. Helena.

To maintain their correspondence with this vast country, and their other Asiatic settlements, the English company have fixed upon St. Helena as a place of refreshment. This island which is only between twenty-eight and twenty-nine miles in circumference, lies in fifteen degrees fifty minutes south latitude, between Africa and America, and almost at an equal distance from those two quarters of the globe. It does not appear that the Portuguese, who discovered it in 1502, ever established a colony there; but it is certain that, agreeable to their usual method, they put on shore some cattle and poultry for the use of the ships that might touch there. These conveniencies invited the Dutch to form a small settlement upon the island, which they were afterwards dispossessed

dispossessed of by the English, who have been settled there ever since the year 1673.

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THOUGH St. Helena appears to be nothing but a large rock, beaten on all sides by the waves, it is nevertheless a delightful spot. The climate is more temperate than might be expected; the soil, which is only a foot and a half deep, is covered with citrons, palms, pomegranates and other trees, laden with flowers and fruit at the same time; while streams of excellent water, which nature has distributed better than art could have done, enliven the whole scene. Those who are born in this fortunate abode enjoy a perfect state of health; passengers are here cured of their disorders, particularly of the scurvy. Four hundred families composed of English, and of French refugees, cultivate vegetables, and breed cattle, which are of an exquisite flavour, and of great service to the ships crews that put in there. This settlement, which nature and art have united to render almost impregnable, has, however, one grand defect; the ships that return from India to Europe land there with ease and security, but the outward-bound ships cannot reach this asylum, being strongly repelled by winds and adverse currents. To avoid the inconveniencies attending so long a voyage, when made without stopping, several of them put in at the Cape of Good Hope; others, particularly those bound to Arabia and Malabar, take in refreshments at the islands of Comora.

THESE islands, that lie in the Mozambique channel, between the coast of Zanguebar and Madagascar, are five in number; the principal one, from which this small archipelago takes its name, is little known. The Portuguese, who discovered it in the course of their first expeditions, brought the name of Europeans into such detestation by their cruelties, that all who have since ventured to go on shore there have

The use the
English
make of the
islands of
Comora.

either

either been massacred or very ill treated. It has accordingly been quite forsaken. The islands of Mayota, Moëti, and Anjuan, are not more frequented, on account of the difficulty of approaching them, and the want of a safe anchorage. The English vessels put in at the island of Joanna.

HERE it is that, within the compass of thirty leagues, nature displays all her riches, with all her simplicity. Hills that are ever green, and vallies that are always gay, every where present a variety of delightful landscapes. Thirty thousand inhabitants, distributed into seventy-three villages, share its productions. They speak the Arabic language, and their religion is a very corrupt sort of Mohammedism; their moral principles are more refined than they usually are in this part of the globe; the habit they have contracted of living upon milk and vegetables has given them an unconquerable aversion for labour. This laziness is the cause of a particular air of consequence, which consists, among persons of distinction, in suffering the nails to grow to an immoderate length. In order that this negligence may have the appearance of beauty, they tinge their nails with a yellowish red, which they extract from a shrub.

THESE people, born to be indolent, have lost that liberty which they, doubtless, came hither to enjoy from a neighbouring continent, of which they were the original inhabitants. An Arabian trader, not quite a century ago, having killed a Portuguese gentleman at Mozambique, threw himself into a boat, which chance conducted to Joanna. This stranger made such good use of his superior abilities, and the assistance of a few of his countrymen, that he acquired an absolute authority, which is still maintained by his grandson. The change in the government did not at all diminish the liberty and security enjoyed by the English, who landed upon the island. They continued

to put their sick on shore without molestation, where the wholesomeness of the air, the excellence of the fruits, provisions, and water, soon restored them to health. They were only obliged to give a higher price for the provisions they wanted, for which the following reasons may be assigned.

THE Arabians having been induced to frequent an island governed by an Arab, have brought the Indian manufactures into vogue; and as the cowries, coconuts, and other commodities they received in exchange, were not sufficient to defray the expence of this article of luxury, the islanders have been obliged to demand money for their goats and poultry, which they before exchanged for glass beads, and other baubles of as little value. This innovation has not, however, made the English desert a place of refreshment, which has no other inconvenience than that of being at too great a distance from our latitudes.

A SIMILAR inconvenience did not prevent the English company from extending their trade very considerably. The intercourse carried on between one port of India and another was too confined, and of too little consequence, to engage their attention for any long time. They were soon sufficiently enlightened to perceive that it was not for their interest to continue this kind of commerce; and therefore invited the private traders of their own nation to embark in it. They lent them their assistance, by taking a share in their expeditions, and granting them privileges on board their own fleets, and frequently even undertook to be the carriers of their merchandise at a low freight. This generous behaviour resulting from a national spirit, and so diametrically opposite to that of other companies, quickly gave activity, strength, and credit, to the English settlements. Their free merchants were soon in possession of a dozen brigantines, that were employ-

The English
company
leave the
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trade to pri-
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turers.

ed within the Ganges, or were dispatched from thence to Acham, Keda, Johor and Ligor. They fitted out an equal number of larger vessels from Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, which frequented all the sea-ports in the east. These vessels would have been still more numerous, had not the company exacted a duty of five per cent. in all the places where they had settlements, and eight and a half per cent. upon all the remittances made by the free merchants to the capital. When their necessities did not compel them to remit part of these unreasonable demands, these merchants lent their money upon bottomry, sometimes to other European merchants that wanted it, but most frequently to the captains of ships belonging to their own nation, who, not being strictly dependent upon the company, can traffic for others in the voyages they make for them.

The company judge it improper to keep up their navy.

At its first rise, this great body was ambitious of maintaining a maritime force. This was quite laid aside when they resumed their operations in the time of the Protector. Having nothing then in view but profit, they resolved to embark the goods on private bottoms; and what was then done through necessity, has since been continued through oeconomy. There are merchants who furnish them with ships, completely rigged and victualled, to carry out to India, and bring back to Europe, such a number of tons as they contract for. The time they are to stay at the place of their destination is always fixed. Those which happen to have no cargo to bring back, are usually hired by some free merchant, who engages to indemnify the owner. These are always the first sent home the following year, to prevent their rigging from being too much worn. In cases of necessity the company will equip them out of their own storehouses; but they require the payment of a stipulated rate of fifty per cent. advance on them.

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THE vessels employed in this navigation carry from six to eight hundred tons burden. At their departure the company occupy just so much room as is sufficient to hold their iron, their lead, their copper, their woollens, and Madeira wine, which are the only merchandise they send to India. The owners are allowed to store the remaining part of each vessel with the provisions necessary for so long a voyage, and any other articles which the society they are concerned for do not trade in. On their return, they have likewise a right to assign to any use they think proper a space equal to thirty tons, which, by their contract, is reserved to themselves: they may even take in the same articles as are embarked for the company. Till lately they used to pay the company thirty per cent. on the value of these commodities; but since the 21st of October 1773, this duty has been reduced to one-half. It was thought that this indulgence would dispose the owners and their agents more punctually to fulfil their engagements, and would put a stop to fraudulent importations. The spirit of humanity, which is more common in free states than in others, has in England given rise to a very commendable custom: the surgeon of each ship that arrives from India receives, besides his pay, twenty-two livres ten sols, (near 20 shillings) by way of gratuity for every man in the ship's company whom he brings back to Europe.

THE company, disengaged from the trouble necessarily attending the maintenance of a navy, as well as from the country trade in India, had no other object to take up their attention than the commerce carried on directly between Europe and Asia. They entered upon it with a capital of 8,322,547 livres 10 sols (364,111l. 9d. $\frac{1}{2}$); and, in 1676, having by fortunate events been enabled to make a division of cent. per cent. they thought it most for their interest to double

Capital of
the com-
pany.

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the compa-
ny's trade.

their capital. This capital still kept increasing, till in 1702 the two companies that had so obstinately opposed each other, threw their wealth, their plans, and their hopes, into one common stock. It has since risen to seventy-two millions, (3,150,000*l.*) divided into shares, originally of 1,125, (not quite 50*l.*) and afterwards of 2,250 livres (not quite 100*l.*)

THE trade was, in the beginning, carried on with great spirit and success, notwithstanding the smallness of their stock. As early as the year 1628, the company employed twelve thousand tons of shipping, and four thousand seamen. Their expeditions varied in an inconceivable manner; and were more or less considerable, according to the ignorance or capacity of those who conducted them; the different states of peace or war, the prosperity, or misfortune of the mother country, the fondness or indifference of the Europeans for Indian manufactures; and the different degrees of competition they met with from other nations. Since the beginning of the present century, these changes have been neither so frequent, nor so remarkable. The trade has been established upon a more firm basis, and the sales have risen to seventy-eight millions (above 3,400,000*l.*)

THE increase of their trade would have been still greater, had it not been for the restraints that were laid upon it. To enter into a detail of these would be too long and too minute a task. It will be sufficient to mention, that every ship returning from India is obliged to unlade in England, and that those which bring prohibited goods are compelled to land them at the port of London. The cottons and stuffs that come from these countries pay very high duties; those levied upon tea are still higher. If the government hoped, by laying on so enormous a tax, to abate the excessive fondness of the people for this liquor, its expectations have not been answered.

TEA

TEA was introduced into England by the lords Arlington and Ossory, who imported it from Holland in 1666, and their ladies brought it into fashion among people of their own rank. At that time it sold in London for sixty-seven or sixty-eight livres (about 3*l*.) a pound, though it cost but three or four at Batavia. Notwithstanding the price was kept up with very little variation, the fondness for this liquor gained ground; it was not, however, brought into common use till towards the year 1715, when green tea began to be drunk, whereas till then no sort was known but the bohea. The fondness for this Asiatic plant has since become universal. Perhaps, the phrenzy is not without its inconveniences; but it cannot be denied, that it has contributed more to the sobriety of the nation than the severest laws, the most eloquent harangues of christian orators, or the best treatises of morality.

IN 1766 six millions of pounds of tea were brought from China by the English, four millions five hundred thousand by the Dutch, two millions four hundred thousand by the Swedes, the same quantity by the Danes, and two millions one hundred thousand by the French. The sum total of these quantities amounts to seventeen millions four hundred thousand pounds. The preference given by most nations to chocolate, coffee, and other liquors, joined to a series of observations carefully pursued for several years, and the most exact calculations that can possibly be made in such complicated cases, inclines us to think that the whole consumption throughout Europe does not exceed five millions four hundred thousand pounds. In this case, that of Great Britain must be twelve millions.

It is universally allowed, that there are at least two millions in the mother country, and a million in the colonies, which constantly drink tea. It is not unreasonable

sonable to suppose, that each individual of these consumes four pounds in a year; but should the quantity be something less, the deficiency is supplied by those who are less attached to it, and who for this reason have not been taken into the account. A pound of tea, which costs only thirty sols (about 1s. 4d.) in the east, constantly sells in England for six livres ten sols (near six shillings) including the duty: consequently the rage for this Asiatic plant costs the nation about seventy-two millions (about 3,150,000l.)

To oppose the entries of the custom-house to this computation would argue either ignorance or artifice. It is true that the amount of the duties, which, according to this calculation, ought to be about 18,000,000 livres, (near 790,000l.) is hardly half so much; but the contraband trade in this commodity carried on in England is notorious. The government itself is so thoroughly convinced of it, that, in order to lessen it, it has lately lowered the duty twenty sols (10d.) a pound. In all probability it would have been still more generous, had it not unfortunately been under the necessity of considering its customs as a resource of finance, rather than as the regulator of its commerce. This relaxation, which of itself is not sufficient to prevent the teas in the different ports of Europe from being smuggled into Great Britain, has been rendered more efficacious by the national acquisition of the isle of Man, which belonged to the Athol family.

THOUGH most branches of the public revenue have been increased by an arrangement, which deprived the illicit trader of his most convenient market, the Indian company have been particularly benefited by it. As their commodities were subjected to higher duties than any others, the clandestine importation of them was more common, and was principally carried on by the isle of Man, which is extremely well situated to receive every

every thing that comes from the North. Tea was the favourite object of this contraband trade. The English company will not fail, in future, to provide as much stock as may answer their demands, and to secure to themselves the advantages which their rivals came to carry away from them even within the limits of their own empire.

THE teas and other merchandise that arrive from India are paid for in money. The government, which is not ignorant of this, has limited the exportation of specie to 6,750,000 livres (about 295,000*l.*). This unaccountable restriction, so unworthy a commercial people, neither has been or can be carried into execution. The sums registered are always much higher; but this indulgence does not prevent considerable sums from being clandestinely carried abroad without the knowledge of the custom-house officers. These fraudulent practices have increased in proportion as the trade has become more extensive; and the money sent out of the kingdom has been long computed at one third of the profit arising from the sales.

THIS exportation of specie would have been more considerable, if the company had adhered to that article in their charter, by which it is provided, that they shall export in merchandise of their own nation, the value of the tenth part of what they take in money upon their vessels. They have constantly made a charge for much greater sums in tin, lead, and English cloths, without reckoning the profits made in India upon iron from Sweden and Biscay, and other articles taken from several countries of Europe.

THEIR advocates, in order to reinstate them in the good opinion of the public, which they have but seldom enjoyed, have frequently asserted that this body occasioned as much money to be brought into the country, as they carried out of it. This plea caused
such

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such a warm altercation in the beginning of the present century, that the government thought the question not unworthy of its attention. It was found by consulting the registers, that from the end of December 1712 to the end of December 1717, there had been exported to India 52,563,037 livres 10 sols (2,299,632l. 17s. 9d. $\frac{3}{4}$.) From all circumstances it appeared, that the money clandestinely carried out amounted, at least to one half; and that consequently there could be no mistake in estimating the amount of both these sums at 78,844,566 livres 5 sols (3,449,449l.) The sums remitted home by the company, in the same space of time, amounted to 75,058,391 livres 5 sols (3,283,804l. 12s. 1d. $\frac{1}{2}$.) Thus, supposing these calculations to be just, the consumption of the Asiatic productions in England for five years, should not have risen so high as 3,786,165 livres (about 165,645l.): but there is reason to believe that it rose much higher; and that a great deal of merchandise apparently sold to foreigners, never stirred out of the kingdom. The partiality that has lately prevailed in favour of Scotch and Irish linens printed in England, and the increase of the silk manufacture, by lessening the demand for contraband goods, must of necessity render the commerce of the East more advantageous to the nation. Before the year 1720, Great Britain annually consumed three millions seven hundred and fifty thousand yards of India cottons; but this consumption is greatly diminished.

Dividends
of the pro-
prietors.

It is not to be supposed, that any changes could happen in the connections of the Indian trade with the state in general, without producing some alterations in the private shares of the proprietors. Their profits have at certain periods been enormous; at others, very slender. The shares have been regulated in conformity to these variations. The dividend, which, for a long

long time, had been no more than seven per cent. was, in 1743, raised to eight. It was afterwards reduced to six; in 1766 it rose to ten, and since that time to twelve and a half. This was more than the situation of the company could afford; since, at this period, they had little more remaining than their original capital. If this be the case, how has it happened that so small a capital should, in the opinion of the public, have acquired the value of 280,000,000, (above 12,250,000*l*.) which is the amount according to the price of the stock.

IT is not impossible to answer this objection. The enthusiasm of the English is well known. It has repeatedly been excited by circumstances that would not have made the least impression on the most volatile and trifling people. An important event has had a powerful effect upon the whole nation. They have abandoned themselves with all the impetuosity of their character to the vast prospects that were opened to them by the recent conquest of Bengal.

SHOULD it be asked, if this astonishing revolution, which has had so sensible an influence, both upon the state of the inhabitants of this part of Asia, and upon the trade of the European nations in these climates, hath been consequence and result of a series of political schemes?—If it be one of those events, of which prudence has a right to claim the merit? We shall answer, No. Chance alone has determined it: and the circumstances that have opened this field of glory and power to the English, far from promising them the success they have had, seemed on the contrary to threaten them with the most fatal reverse of fortune.

A PERNICIOUS custom had for some time prevailed in these countries. The governors of all the European settlements took upon them to grant an assylum to such of the natives of the country as were afraid of
oppression

Conquest of
Bengal.
Advantages
drawn by
the English
from this
acquisition,
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oppression or punishment. As they received very considerable sums in return for their protection, they overlooked the danger to which the interests of their principals were exposed by this proceeding. One of the chief officers of Bengal, who was apprized of this resource, took refuge among the English at Calcutta to avoid the punishment due to his treachery. He was taken under their protection. The subah, justly irritated, put himself at the head of his army, attacked the place, and took it. He put the garrison into a close dungeon, where they were suffocated in the space of twelve hours. Three and twenty of them only remained alive. These wretched people offered large sums to the keeper of the prison, to prevail upon him to get their deplorable situation represented to the prince. Their cries and lamentations were sufficient informations to the people, who were touched with compassion; but no one would venture to address the despotic monarch upon the subject. The expiring English were told that he was asleep; and there was not, perhaps, a single person in Bengal who thought that the tyrant's slumbers should be interrupted for one moment, even to preserve the lives of one hundred and fifty unfortunate men.

ADMIRAL Watson, who was just arrived in India with his Squadron, and Colonel Clive who had so remarkably distinguished himself in the war of the Carnatic, did not delay to avenge the cause of their country. They got together the English who had been dispersed, and were flying from place to place; they went up the Ganges in the month of December 1756, retook Calcutta, made themselves masters of several other places, and gained a complete victory over the subah.

SUCH a rapid and extensive success becomes in a manner inconceivable, when we consider that it was only with a body of five hundred men that the English

was

was to stand against the whole force of Bengal. But if their superiority was partly owing to their better discipline, and to other evident advantages that the Europeans have in battle over the Indian powers; the ambition of eastern chiefs, the avarice of their ministers, and the nature of a government, whose only springs are fear and present interest, were of still more effectual service to them: they had experience enough to take advantage of the concurrence of these several circumstances in their first, as well as in every succeeding enterprize. The subah was detested by all his own people, as tyrants generally are; the principal officers sold their interest to the English; he was betrayed at the head of his army, the greatest part of which refused to engage; and he himself fell into the hands of his enemies, who caused him to be strangled in prison.

THEY disposed of the subahship in favour of Jaffier-Ally-Khan, the ring-leader of the conspiracy; who ceded to the company some provinces, with a grant of every privilege, exemption and favour, to which they could have any pretension. But soon growing weary of the yoke he had brought upon himself, he was secretly looking out for means to get rid of it. His designs were discovered, and he was confined in the center of his own capital.

COSSIM-ALLY-KHAN, his nephew, was proclaimed in his stead. He had purchased that usurpation with an immense sum of money. But he did not enjoy it long. Impatient of the yoke as his predecessor had been, he gave some tokens of his disposition, and refused to submit to the laws the company imposed upon him. Upon this the war broke out again. The same Jaffier-Ally-Khan, whom the English kept in confinement, was again proclaimed subah of Bengal. They marched against Cossim-Ally-Khan. His general

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neral officers were corrupted: he was betrayed and entirely defeated: too happy, that whilst he lost his dignity, he still preserved the immense treasures he had amassed.

NOTWITHSTANDING this revolution, Cossim-Ally did not drop his hopes of vengeance. Full of resentment, and loaded with treasure, he set out for the nabob of Bennes, chief visir in the Mogul's empire. He and all the neighbouring princes re-united in opposition to the common enemy, who threatened them all equally. But now the contest lay no longer between them and a handful of Europeans just arrived from the coast of Coromandel; they were to engage with the whole strength of Bengal, of which the English were masters. Elated with their successes, they did not wait to be attacked; they set out directly and made head against so formidable a league, marching on with all the confidence which Clive could inspire, a leader, whose name seemed to have become the pledge of conquest. However, Clive did not care to hazard any thing. Part of the campaign was spent in negotiations; but in time the treasures which the English had already drawn from Bengal, served to ensure them new conquests. The heads of the Indian army were corrupted; and when the nabob of Bennes was desirous of coming to action, he was obliged to fly with his men without ever being able to engage.

By this victory, the country of Bennes fell into the hands of the English: and it seemed as if nothing could hinder them from annexing that sovereignty to that of Bengal: but either from moderation or prudence, they were content to levy eight millions by contribution: and they offered peace to the nabob on conditions which would render him incapable of doing them any hurt; but such as they were, he most readily

readily agreed to them, that he might regain the possession of his own provinces.

IN the midst of these calamities, Cossim-Ally still found means to preserve part of his treasures, and retired to the Cheyks, a people situated in the neighbourhood of Delhi, from whence he made an attempt to procure some allies, and to raise up a body of enemies to oppose the English.

WHILE matters were thus circumstanced in Bengal, the Mogul having been driven out of Delhi by the Pattans, by whom his son had been set up in his room, was wandering from one province to another in search of a place of refuge in his own territories, and requesting succour from his own vassals, but without success. Abandoned by his subjects, betrayed by his allies, without support, and without any army, he was allured by the power of the English, and implored their protection; they promised to conduct him to Delhi, and re-establish him on his throne; but they insisted that he should previously cede to them the absolute sovereignty over Bengal. This cession was made by an authentic act, and attended with all the formalities usually practised throughout the Mogul empire.

THE English, possessed of this title, which was to give a kind of legitimacy to their usurpation, at least in the eyes of the vulgar, soon forgot the promises they had made. They gave the Mogul to understand, that particular circumstances would not suffer them to be concerned in such an enterprise; that some better opportunity was to be hoped for; and to make up for all his losses, they assigned him a pension of six millions (262,500*l.*) with the revenue of Illahabad, and Shah Ichanabad or Delhi; upon which that unfortunate prince was reduced to subsist himself in one of the principal towns of the province of Bennesar, where

where he had taken up his residence. Thus the Mogul empire comes to be shared between two governing powers, one of which is acknowledged in the several districts of India, where the English company has any establishments and authority: the other in such provinces as border on Delhi, and in those parts to which the influence of that company does not extend.

THE English, thus become sovereigns of Bengal, have thought it incumbent on them to keep up the shadow of ancient forms, in a country where they have the lead, and, perhaps the only power that is likely to be secure and lasting. They govern the kingdom still under the name of a subah, who is of their nomination and in their pay, and seems to give his own orders. It is from him that all public acts seem to proceed and issue, though the decrees are in fact the result of the deliberations of the council at Calcutta; so that the people, notwithstanding their change of masters, have for a considerable time been induced to believe, that they still submitted but to the same yoke.

If we should wish to know the amount of the public revenues of Bengal, we shall find at the period of its conquest, it was equal to fourscore millions. (3,500,000*l*.) The outgoings, either for the government, or defence of the province, were stated at forty-one millions (1,797,750*l*.); six millions (262,500*l*.) were agreed to be given to the Mogul, and three millions (131,250*l*.) to the nabob; so that the remainder to the company was thirty millions (1,312,500*l*.) Their purchases in the different marts of India should absorb a great part of this sum; but still it has been thought there must after all remain a surplus of several millions to be carried into Great Britain.

THIS new arrangement of matters, without having wrought any sensible change in the exterior form of
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the English company, has essentially changed their object. They are no longer a trading body, they are a territorial power which farm out their revenues in aid of a commerce that formerly was their sole existence, and which, notwithstanding the extension it has received, is no more than an additional object in the various combinations of their present real grandeur. The arrangements intended to give stability to a situation so prosperous are perhaps, the most reasonable that can be. England has at present in India an establishment to the amount of nine thousand eight hundred European troops, and fifty-four thousand sipahis well armed and well disciplined. Three thousand of these Europeans, and twenty-five thousand sipahis are dispersed along the borders of the Ganges.

THE most considerable body of these troops has been stationed in Bennaes, once the source of Indian science, and still the most famous academy of these rich countries, where European avarice pays no regard to any thing. This situation is chosen, because it appeared favourable for stopping the progress of those warlike people who might descend from the mountains of the north; and in case of attack, the maintaining of a war in a foreign territory would be less ruinous than in the countries of which the company is to receive the revenues. On the south, as far as it has been found practicable, they have occupied all the narrow passes by which an enterprising and active adversary might attempt to penetrate into the province. Dacca, which is in the center of it, has under its walls a considerable force always ready to march wherever their presence may be necessary. All the nabobs and rajahs who are dependent on the subah of Bengal are disarmed, surrounded by spies in order to discover their conspiracies, and by troops to render them ineffectual.

IN case of any unfortunate revolution which might oblige the victorious power to change its quarters, and abandon its posts, the English have constructed a fort near Calcutta called Fort William, which, in times of urgent necessity, would serve as a place of refuge for the army, should they be forced to retreat, and give time to expect the necessary reinforcements for the recovery of their superiority. This fort is a regular octagon with eight bastions, several counter-guards, and some half moons already begun, without a glacis, or covered way. The ditch of this fort may be about one hundred and sixty feet broad, its depth nearly eighteen. On the side of the Ganges, the place is weakest, and the curtains are covered only with redans, over which there is a double battery raised on piles. The principal inconvenience of this citadel, whose construction cost twenty millions, (875,000l.) is, that it does not serve to protect Calcutta, which is now become the city of the greatest importance in India, since its population has amounted to six hundred thousand souls, since immense treasures have been accumulated there, and since it is become from a variety of incidents the theatre of a most extensive commerce. It must necessarily be that the wholesomeness of the air, and the advantage of a very fortunate position, has prevailed over every other consideration.

NOTWITHSTANDING the wise precautions taken by the English, they are not, and cannot be, without apprehensions. The Mogul power may gain strength, and wish to rescue one of its finest provinces out of the hands of a foreign oppressor. They have reason to fear that the barbarous nations may be again allured by the softness of the climate. The princes now at variance may, perhaps, put an end to their contests, and

and reunite in favour of their common liberty. It is not impossible but the Indians, who at present constitute the chief force of the victorious English, may one day turn upon them those arms of which they have been taught the use. The grandeur of the company, which is but imaginary, may, perhaps, moulder away without their being actually driven from what they possess. It is well known that the Marattas have their eyes continually turned towards this fine country, and are constantly threatening it with invasion. Unless the English are successful enough either by bribery or intrigue, to divert the storm, Bengal will be the object of their pillage and rapine, whatever measures may be taken to oppose a light cavalry, whose alertness exceeds every thing we can say of it. The incursions of these ravages may be repeated; and then the company will have less tribute to receive, and their expences will be increased. Supposing, however, that none of the misfortunes we have ventured to foresee, should take place, is it likely that the revenues of Bengal should always continue the same? This is at least a matter of doubt. The English Company no longer export any coin, but even carry away some for the use of their factories. The agents of the merchants make immense fortunes, and even private persons gain a tolerable competence, which they repair to the mother country to enjoy. The other European nations find in the treasures of this ruling power accommodations, which make it unnecessary to introduce new bullion. Must not all these combined circumstances necessarily occasion a deficiency in the finances of those countries, which will sooner or later be felt in the making up of the public accounts?

THAT period might indeed be at some distance, if the English respecting the rights of humanity were to rid those countries of the oppression under which they

have continued to groan for so many ages. Then Calcutta, far from being an object of terror to the Indians, would become a tribunal always open to the complaints of those unhappy sufferers whom tyranny should dare to molest. Property would be held so sacred, that the treasure which has long been buried would be taken out of the bowels of the earth, to serve the purpose of its destination. Agriculture and manufactures would be encouraged to such a degree, that the exports would become from day to day more considerable, and the company by following such maxims as these, instead of being driven to the necessity of lessening the tributes which they found established, might possibly find means to bring about an augmentation consistent with the general satisfaction of the natives. Let it not be said that such a plan is chimerical. The English company itself has already proved the possibility of it.

THE Europeans, who have acquired any territory in India, generally choose for their farmers the natives of the country, from whom it is common to exact such considerable sums in advance, that in order to pay them they are obliged to borrow at an exorbitant interest. The distress, which these greedy farmers voluntarily bring on themselves, obliges them to exact of the inhabitants, to whom they let some parcels of the land below their value, so considerable a rent, that these unfortunate persons quit their villages, and abandon them for ever. The contractor, ruined by this incident, which renders him insolvent, is dismissed to make room for a successor, who commonly meets with the same fate; so that it very frequently happens, that nothing but the first sum deposited, or very little more, is ever received from the estate.

DIFFERENT steps have been taken in the English colonies, on the coast of Coromandel. It was observed that the villages had been formed by several families, who

who for the most part were connected with each other; this has been the reason why the custom of employing farmers has been abolished. Every land was taxed at a certain rent by the year, and the head of the family was security for his relations and connexions. This method united the colonists one with another, and created in them a disposition as well as the power of affording each other a reciprocal support. This has occasioned the settlements of that nation to rise to the utmost degree of prosperity they were capable of attaining; while those of her rivals were languishing for want of cultivation and manufactures, and consequently of population.

WHY must a mode of conduct which does so much honour to reason and humanity be confined to the small territory of Madras? Can it be true that moderation is a virtue that belongs only to a state of mediocrity? The English company till these latter times had always held a conduct superior to that of the other settlements. Their agents, their factors, were all well chosen. The most part of them were young men of good families, already instructed in the rudiments of commerce, and who were not afraid, when the service of their country called upon them, to cross those immense seas which England considers but as a part of her empire. The company had generally taken their commerce in a great point of view, and had almost always carried it on like an association of true politicians as well as a body of merchants. Upon the whole their planters, merchants and soldiers had retained more honesty, more regularity, and more firmness than those of the other nations.

WHO would ever have imagined that this same company, by a sudden alteration of conduct, and change of system, could possibly make the people of Bengal regret the despotism of their ancient masters? That fatal revolution has been but too sudden and too real.

A settled plan of tyranny has taken the place of authority occasionally exerted. The exactions are become general and fixed, the oppression continual and absolute. The destructive arts of monopolies are carried to perfection, and new ones have been invented. In a word, the company have tainted and corrupted the public sources of confidence and happiness.

UNDER the government of the Mogul Emperors, the subahs, who had the care of the revenues, were, from the nature of the business, obliged to leave the receipt of them to Nabobs, Polygars, and Jemidars, who were a sort of under-security to other Indians, and these still to others; so that the produce of the lands passed on, and was partly sunk amidst a multitude of intermediate hands, before it came into the coffers of the subah, who, on his part, delivered but a very small portion of it to the emperor. This administration, faulty in many respects, had in it one favourable circumstance for the people, that the farmers never being changed, the rent of the farms remained always the same; because the least increase, as it disturbed the whole chain of advantage which every one received in his turn, would infallibly have occasioned a revolt: a terrible resource, but the only one left in favour of humanity in countries groaning under the oppressions of despotic rulers.

It is probable that in the midst of these regulations there were many injuries and partial distresses. But, at least, as the receipt of the public monies was made upon a fixed and moderate assessment, emulation was not wholly extinguished. The cultivators of the land being sure of laying up the produce of their harvest, after paying with exactness the rate of their farm, assisted the natural goodness of the soil by their labour; the weavers, masters of price of their works, being at liberty to make choice of the buyer which best suited them,

them, exerted themselves in extending and improving their manufactures. Both the one and the other, having no anxiety with regard to their subsistence, yielded with satisfaction to the most delightful inclinations of nature, or the prevailing propensity of these climates; and beheld in the increase of their family nothing more than the means of augmenting their riches. Such are evidently the reasons why industry, agriculture, and population, have been carried to such a height in the province of Bengal. One would think they might still be carried further under the government of a free people, friends to humanity; but the thirst of money, the most tormenting, the most cruel of all passions, has given rise to a pernicious and destructive government.

THE English, become sovereigns of Bengal, not content to receive the revenues on the same footing as the ancient subahs, have been desirous at once to augment the produce of the farms, and to appropriate to themselves the rents. To accomplish both these objects, they are become the farmers to their own subah, that is to a slave on whom they have just conferred that empty title, the more securely to impose upon the people. The consequence of this new plan has been to pillage the farmers, in order to substitute in their room the company's agents. They have also monopolized the sale of salt, tobacco, and betel, articles of immediate necessity in those countries, but they have done this under the name, and apparently on the account of the subah. They have gone still further, and have obliged the very same subah to establish in their favour an exclusive privilege for the sale of cotton brought from any other province, in order to raise it to an exorbitant price. They have augmented the duties, and, to conclude all, have obtained an edict, which has been published, to forbid all Europeans,

Europeans, except the English, from trading freely in the interior parts of Bengal.

WHEN we reflect on this cruel prohibition, it seems as if it had been contrived only to deprive of every power of mischief that unfortunate country, whose prosperity for their own interest, ought to be the only object of the English company. Besides, it is easy to see that the avarice of the members of the council at Calcutta has dictated that shameful law. Their design was to ensure to themselves the produce of all the manufactures, in order to compel the merchants of other nations, who chose to trade from one part of India to another, to purchase these articles of them at an exorbitant price, or to renounce their undertakings.

BUT still in the midst of this overbearing conduct, so contrary to the advantage of their constituents, these treacherous agents have attempted to disguise themselves under the mask of zeal. They have pretended, that as they were under the necessity of exporting to England a quantity of merchandise proportioned to the extent of her commerce, the competition of private traders was prejudicial to the purchases of the company.

UNDER the same pretence, and in order to extend this exclusion to the foreign settlements while they appear to respect their rights, they have of late years ordered more merchandise than Bengal could furnish. At the same time the weavers have been forbidden to work for other nations until the English orders were completed. Thus the workmen, not being any longer at liberty to choose among the several purchasers, have been forced to deliver the fruits of their labour at any price they could get for them.

LET us consider too how these workmen have been paid. Here reason is confounded; we are at a loss for excuses or pretexts. The English, conquerors of Bengal,

gal, possessors of the immense treasures which the fruitfulness of the soil, and the industry of the inhabitants had collected, have debased themselves so far as to alter the value of the specie. They have set the example of this meanness unknown to the despotic rulers of Asia; and it is through this disgraceful act that they have announced to the natives their sovereignty over them. It is true that such an operation, so contrary to the principles of trade and public faith, could not last long. The company themselves found the pernicious effects of it, and were resolved to call in all the base coin, in order to replace it with other money, exactly the same as that which was always current in those countries. But let us attend to the manner in which so necessary an alteration was conducted.

THEY had struck in gold rupees to the amount of about fifteen millions (656,250*l.*) nominal value, but which represented in fact but nine millions (393,750*l.*); for four-tenths, or something more was alloy. All who were found to possess these gold rupees of false alloy, were enjoined to bring them into the treasury at Calcutta, where they should be reimbursed for them in silver rupees; but instead of ten rupees and a half of silver, which each gold rupee ought to be worth according to its rate, they gave them but six; so that the amount of the alloy became the clear loss of the creditor.

AN oppression so general must necessarily be attended with violence; and consequently it has been necessary several times to have recourse to force of arms to carry into execution the orders of the council at Calcutta. These forces have not been employed against the Indians alone; tumults have also broken out, and military preparations been made on all sides, even in the midst of peace. The Europeans have
been

been exposed to signal acts of hostility, and particularly the French, who, notwithstanding their being so reduced, and so weak, have still excited the jealousy of their former rivals.

If to the picture of public distresses we were to add that of private extortions, we should find the agents of the company, almost every where, exacting their tribute with extreme rigour, and raising contributions for them with the utmost cruelty. We should see them carrying a kind of inquisition into every family, and sitting in judgment upon every fortune; robbing indiscriminately the artizan and the labourer, imputing it as a crime that he is not sufficiently rich, and punishing him accordingly. We should view them selling their favour and their credit, as well to oppress the innocent as to screen the guilty. We should find in consequence of these irregularities, despair seizing every heart, and an universal dejection getting the better of every mind, and uniting to put a stop to the progress and activity of commerce, agriculture, and population.

It will be thought, without doubt, after these details, it was impossible that Bengal should have fresh evils to dread. But, however, as if the elements, in league with mankind, had intended to bring all at once upon the same people every calamity that by turns lays waste the universe, a drought of which there never had been an instance in those climates, came upon them, and prepared the way for a most dreadful famine in a country of all the most fertile.

In Bengal they have two harvests; one in April, the other in October. The first, called the little harvest, consists of the smaller grain: the second, stiled the grand harvest, is singly of rice. The rains which commence regularly in the month of August, and end

in the middle of October, are the occasion of these different productions ; and it was by a drought which happened in 1769, at the season when the rains are expected, that there was a failure in the great harvest of 1769, and the less harvest of 1770. It is true that the rice on the higher grounds did not suffer greatly by this disturbance of the seasons, but there was far from a sufficient quantity for the nourishment of all the inhabitants of the country ; add to which, the English, who were engaged beforehand to take proper care of their subsistence, as well as of the sipahis belonging to them, did not fail to keep locked up in their magazine a part of the grain, though the harvest was insufficient.

THEY have been accused of having made a very bad use of that necessary foresight, in order to carry on the most odious and the most criminal of all monopolies. It may be true that such an infamous method of acquiring riches may have tempted some individuals ; but that the chief agents of the company, that the council of Calcutta could have adopted and ordered such a destructive scheme ; that, to gain a few millions of rupees, the council should coolly have devoted to destruction several millions of their fellow creatures, and by the most cruel means ; this is a circumstance we never can give credit to. We even venture to pronounce it impossible ; because such wickedness could never enter at once into the minds and hearts of a set of men, whose business it is to deliberate and act for the good of others.

BUT still this scourge did not fail to make itself felt throughout the extent of Bengal. Rice, which is commonly sold at one sol ($\frac{1}{2}$ d.) for three pounds, has gradually been raised till it came so high as be sold at four sols (2d.) per pound, and it has even been up to five or six sols (about 3d.) ; neither indeed was there any to be found, except in such places where the Europeans

Europeans had taken care to collect it for their own use.

THE unhappy Indians were every day perishing by thousands under this want of sustenance, without any means of help and without any resource, not being able to procure themselves the least nourishment. They were to be seen in their villages, along the public ways, in the midst of European colonies, pale, meagre, fainting, emaciated, consumed by famine; some stretched on the ground in expectation of dying, others scarce able to drag themselves on to seek for any nutriment, and throwing themselves at the feet of the Europeans, intreating them to take them in as their slaves.

To this description, which makes humanity shudder, let us add other objects equally shocking; let imagination enlarge upon them, if possible; let us represent to ourselves infants deserted, some expiring on the breast of their mothers; every where the dying and the dead mingled together; on all sides the groans of sorrow, and the tears of despair; and we shall then have some faint idea of the horrible spectacle Bengal presented for the space of six weeks.

DURING this whole time the Ganges was covered with carcases; the fields and highways were choaked up with them; infectious vapours filled the air, and diseases multiplied; and one evil succeeding another, it was likely to happen, that the plague might have carried off the remainder of the inhabitants of that unfortunate kingdom. It appears, by calculations pretty generally acknowledged, that the famine carried off a fourth part; that is to say, about three millions.

BUT it is still more remarkable, and serves to characterise the gentleness, or rather the indolence, as well moral as natural, of the natives, that amidst this terrible distress, such a multitude of human creatures, pressed

pressed by the most urgent of all necessities, remained in an absolute inactivity, and made no attempts whatever for their self-preservation. All the Europeans, especially the English, were possessed of magazines, and even these were not touched; private houses were so too; no revolt, no massacre, nor the least violence prevailed. The unhappy Indians, resigned to despair, confined themselves to the request of succour they did not obtain, and peaceably waited the relief of death.

LET us now represent to ourselves any part of Europe afflicted by a similar calamity. What disorder! what fury! what atrocious acts! what crimes would ensue! How should we have seen among us Europeans, some contending for their food with their dagger in hand, some pursuing, some flying, and, without remorse, massacring one another! How should we have seen men at last turn their rage on themselves, tearing and devouring their own limbs, and, in the blindness of despair, trampling under foot all authority, as well as every sentiment of nature and reason!

HAD it been the fate of the English to have had the like events to dread on the part of the people of Bengal, perhaps, the famine would have been less general and less destructive. For setting aside, as perhaps we ought, every charge of monopoly, no one will undertake to defend them against the reproach of negligence and insensibility. And in what crisis have they merited that reproach? In the very instant of time when the life or death of several millions of their fellow-creatures was in their power. One would think that, in such alternative, the very love of mankind, that sentiment innate in all hearts, might have inspired them with resources. Might not the poor wretches expiring before the eyes of the Europeans with reason have cried out, “Is it then but for our ruin
“that you are fertile in expedients for your own pre-
“servation?”

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“servation? The immense treasures which a long
“succession of ages had accumulated in this country,
“you have made your own spoils; you have trans-
“ported them into your country; you have raised
“your contributions on us; you have got your agents
“to receive them for you; you are masters of our in-
“terior commerce; you are the sole managers of all
“our exported merchandise; your numerous vessels
“laden with the produce of our industry and our
“soil, pass and repass to the enriching of your facto-
“ries and your colonies. All these things you regu-
“late, and you carry on solely for your own advan-
“tage. But what have you done for our preservati-
“on? What steps have you taken to remove from us
“the scourge that threatened us? Deprived of all
“authority, stripped of our property, weighed down
“by the terrible hand of power, we can only lift our
“hands to you to implore your assistance. Ye have
“heard our groans; ye have seen famine making very
“quick advances upon us; and then ye attended to
“your own preservation. Ye have hoarded up the
“small quantity of provisions which escaped the pes-
“tilence; ye have filled your granaries with them,
“and distributed them among your soldiers. But we,
“the sad dupes of your avarice, wretches in every
“regard, as well by your tyranny as by your indif-
“ference, ye treat us like slaves, while you suppose
“we have any riches; but when it appears we are
“but a set of beings full of wants, then you no
“longer regard us even as human creatures. Of
“what service is it to us that you have the manage-
“ment of our public forces entirely in your hands?
“Where are the laws and the morals of which ye are
“so proud? What then is that government whose
“wisdom you so much boast of? Have you put a
“stop to the prodigious exports made by your private
“traders?

“traders? Have ye changed the destination of your
 “ships? Have they traversed the neighbouring seas
 “in search of the means of subsistence for us? Have
 “ye requested it of the adjacent countries? Ah, why
 “has Providence suffered you to break the chain
 “which attached us to our ancient sovereigns? Less
 “grasping, and more humane than ye are, they would
 “have invited plenty from all parts of Asia; they
 “would have opened every communication; they
 “would have lavished their treasures, and have
 “thought they did but enrich themselves while they
 “preserved their subjects.”

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 III.

THIS last reflection, at least, was calculated to make an impression on the English, supposing even that every sentiment of humanity was extinguished in their hearts by the effects of depravity. The barrenness had been announced by a drought; and it is not to be doubted, that, if instead of having solely a regard to themselves, and remaining in an entire negligence of every thing else, they had from the first taken every precaution in their power, they might have accomplished the preservation of many lives that were lost.

It could not happen otherwise, than that an administration so faulty in itself should defeat the means of prosperity attached to the possession of those extensive countries. The company, pressed by real necessities, and finding only insufficient resources in those treasures which serve to dazzle their imagination, has already been obliged to tear aside the veil which concealed their situation from the eyes of all the world. According to a calculation, authenticated on the first of January 1773, the total amount of the company's possessions in Europe, whether in arrears hereafter to be received, or in real merchandise now in their storehouses, or even in immoveables, comes to the sum
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of 175,156,000 livres (7,663,075*l.*): whereas their engagements amount to 207,430,000 livres (14,075,062*l.* 10*s.*); so that there is a deficiency of 32,274,000 livres (1,411,987*l.* 10*s.*) It is true, that the means of the company in India, that is to say, their specie in the chests of their different settlements, outstanding debts due to them, the value of their wares, their civil and military preparations, their elephants, ships and their cargoes at sea, form a capital of 143,939,000 livres (6,297,331*l.* 5*s.*) On the other hand, their debts are not less than the sum of 45,726,000 livres (2,000,462*l.* 10*s.*); so that upon the whole, of their affairs in India, there is a balance in their favour of 98,213,000 livres (3,798,068*l.* 15*s.*) From this must be deducted what the company owes in Europe, that is to say, 32,274,000 livres (1,411,987*l.* 10*s.*) which reduces the sum of the general account to 65,939,000 livres (2,884,831*l.* 5*s.*); and as the amount of their stock is 72,000,000 livres (3,150,000*l.*); it follows, that on their capital there is a real loss of 6,061,000 livres (265,168*l.* 15*s.*) So that, in case all the effects of the company, as well in Europe as in India, could be converted into money, a supposition extremely in their favour, the proprietors would not find their original deposit. Doubtless it was not easy to suspect their situation to be such, when we find the sales of the company have progressively risen from 44,000,000 livres (1,925,000*l.*) the amount of that in 1762, to 80,000,000 (3,500,000*l.*) according to the account of that of 1769. The trade of the company has been carried to such a pitch, that the sales, for these last ten years, to 1771 inclusive, have produced the net sum of 649,207,000 livres (28,402,806*l.* 5*s.*) But it is necessary to remark, that during the above period the company paid for different duties, to which their goods are subject,

subject, to the amount of 170,665,000 livres (7,466,593l. 15s.) that is more than five and twenty per cent. on the produce of the sales. And still this sum, considerable as it is, is exclusive of an annual stipend of 9,000,000 livres (393,750l.); on which condition, government has given up to the company all territorial rights over Bengal.

To make good engagements so extensive, and to distribute at the same time to the proprietors a dividend of 9,000,000 livres (393,750l.) at the rate of twelve and a half per cent. the revenues of India ought to have been managed with great prudence and œconomy: then they might have been sufficient, as well for the purchases the company make in India, as for those made in China, and they might have waved sending any sums to their small factories. It was with this confidence that the proprietors of stock enjoyed quietly their dividend, and even expected it to be raised by the importation of money which had been announced to them. But so far was the event from answering their large expectations, that the company's agents at Bengal, Bombay, and Madras, have continually drawn upon them to make good the insufficiency of the revenues. The draughts drawn by them during the last five years, viz. from 1768 to 1772, both inclusive, amount to the sum of 49,250,000 livres (2,154,687l. 10s.) These draughts have made it unnecessary to send out coin to India; but during the same period they have been obliged to remit to China the sum of 20,000,000 livres (875,000l.) And even this remittance not having been answerable to the prodigious purchases made for the company at Canton, the factory there have been obliged to draw on them for 7,780,000 livres (340,875l.) The company moreover, have exported

exported to India, within the same time, as much as 60,140,000 livres (2,631,125l.) of merchandise; so that, bringing together all these sums, it appears, that during these five years, which seemed likely to be the period of their greatest prosperity, the company, whether by exportations abroad, or by draughts paid in Europe, has employed in trade 137,590,000 livres (6,019,562l. 10s.) which makes the sum of 27,515,000 livres (1,203,781l.) *communibus annis*. However, notwithstanding this prodigious difference between the speculations and the real transactions, if the revenues of Bengal had not been subject to depredations perhaps unparalleled, the company might have been enabled to support with ease all their expences, and still continue a dividend of twelve and a half per cent. to the stockholders. The proof of this will appear in the abstract of their commerce calculated upon the receipts and disbursements of the last years, on the experience of which it may be proper to ground our opinion of the actual state of things.

R E C E I P T.

	<i>Livres.</i>
Produce of their sales, deducting discount,	78,750,000 ^a
Produce of duties for the benefit of the company laid on private trade	560,000 ^b
Value of 500 tons of saltpetre wanted annually for the army - - -	500,000 ^c
Total	79,810,000 ^d

^a 3,445,312l. 10s.^b 24,500l.^c 21,875l.^d 3,447,937l. 10s.

D I S B U R S E.

DISBURSEMENTS.

BOOK

III.

	<i>Livres.</i>
Amount of duties — —	20,250,000 ^a
Freight and charges out — —	11,250,000 ^b
Value of goods annually exported —	11,250,000 ^c
Amount of bullion exported to China, } and of the draughts the factory there } draws annually on the company }	4,500,000 ^d
The impost of five per cent. on the } rough produce of the annual sales, } set at eighty-four millions — }	4,200,000 ^e
Bills of exchange taken from different } parts of India — }	8,080,000 ^f
Annual stipend to be paid to govern- } ment on account of Bengal — }	9,000,000 ^g
Annual dividend on the footing of } twelve and a half per cent. per ann. }	9,000,000 ^h
Interest of bills beyond what the com- } pany receives of government }	1,120,000 ⁱ
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Total	78,650,000 ^k

If, from the amount of the receipt stated at 79,810,000 livres, (3,491,687l. 10s.) we deduct the latter sum of 78,650,000 livres (3,440,973l. 10s.) the surplus of the receipt will be 1,160,000 livres, (50,750l.)

THIS state, the several articles of which having undergone the inspection of parliament cannot be call-

^a 885,937l. 10s.	^b 492,187l. 10s.	^c 492,187l. 10s.
^d 196,875l.	^e 183,750l.	^f 353,500l.
^g 393,750l.	^h 393,750l.	ⁱ 49,000l.
^k 3,440,937l. 10s.		

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ed in question, serves to shew, that, even supposing a wiser administration, both at home and in India, the proprietors had no reason to expect any advantage beyond the dividend of twelve and a half per cent. which had been fixed for them.

BUT, if we ascend from the particular interest of the trading company to considerations of more extent, what resources, what advantages, does not the commerce of India procure to the state? The amount of duties on the company's importations, the impost of five per cent. on the gross produce of their sales, the stipend exacted by government on account of Bengal, form a tribute of 33,450,000 livres (1,463,437l. 10s.) paid annually to Great Britain out of the commerce and possessions of Asia. And so long as the public treasure, assisted by this new branch of revenue, turns it to the improvement of the power and prosperity of the kingdom, the annual mass of riches is still increased by the exports of the company's merchandise; by the charges of their navigation; by the benefit of the dividend at eight and a half above the common interest; by the draughts they pay, since these draughts are the representatives of the fortunes made by their agents in their service, and which they return home to enjoy. All these articles brought together constitute nearly a total of 40,000,000 livres, (1,750,000l.) expended on the commerce of India to the advantage of the land and manufactures of England: and yet this sum of 40,000,000 livres, (1,750,000l.) together with the other of 33,450,000 livres, (1,463,437l. 10s.) received by the government, requires no more than an export of 2 or 300,000 in bullion (about 109,000l. on an average.) Thus the public treasury and the kingdom are equally enriched by the produce of a commerce, which, by the effect of a most extraordinary management, threatens

threatens with ruin the very proprietors who farm it out to their agents. BOOK
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It is easy to judge from the sketch just given, that for a long time they must sacrifice their dividends to clear away entirely that deficiency of 32,000,000 livres, (1,400,000*l.*) which has taken place in their affairs in Europe. But what will be attended with still more difficulty will be, to revive in India the order and œconomy necessary for discharging the debt of 45,000,000 livres (1,968,750*l.*) contracted there on the company's account.

We must allow that the corruption to which the English have given themselves up from the first beginning of their power, the oppression which has succeeded it, the abuses every day multiplying, the entire loss of all principle; all these circumstances together form a contrast totally inconsistent with their past conduct in India, and the real constitution of their government in Europe. But this sort of problem in morals will be easily solved, upon considering with attention the natural effect of circumstances and events.

BEING now become absolute rulers in an empire where they were but traders, it was very difficult for the English not to make a bad use of their power. At a distance from home, men are no longer restrained by the fear of being ashamed to see their countrymen. In a warm climate where the body loses its vigour, the mind must lose some of its strength. In a country where nature and custom lead to indulgence, men are apt to be seduced. In countries where they come for the purpose of growing rich, they easily forget to be just.

PERHAPS, however, in a situation so dangerous, the English would at least have preserved some appearance of moderation and virtue, had they been checked by

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the restraint of the laws: but there were none to direct or to bind them. The regulations made by the company, for the carrying on of their commerce, were not applicable to this new arrangement of affairs; and the English government, considering the conquest of Bengal but as a help towards increasing numerically the revenue of Great Britain, gave up to the company for 9,000,000 livres (393,750*l.*) per annum the destiny of twelve millions of people.

HAPPILY for this portion of our fellow-creatures, a revolution of a peaceable nature is at hand. The nation has been struck with such enormous excesses. She has heard the groans of such a number of victims sacrificed to the avarice and passions of some individuals. The parliament is already employed on this great object. Every detail of that administration is under their inspection; every fact will be cleared up, every abuse unveiled; and the reasons of them inquired into and removed. What a sight to be presented to Europe! What an example to be left to posterity! The hand of liberty is going to weigh the destiny of a whole people in the scale of justice.

YES, august legislators, ye will make good our expectations! Ye will restore mankind to their rights; ye will put a curb on avarice, and break the yoke of tyranny. The authority of law, which is not to be shaken, will every where take place of an administration purely arbitrary. At sight of that authority, the monopolist, that tyrant over industry, will for ever disappear. The fetters which private interest has riveted on commerce, ye will make to give way to general advantage.

You will not confine yourselves to this momentary reformation. You will carry your views into futurity; you will calculate the influence of climate, the danger of circumstances, the contagion of example; and,

and, to prevent their effects, you will select persons without connections, without passions, to visit these distant countries; issuing from the bosom of your metropolis, they are to pass through these provinces, in order to hear complaints, rectify abuses, redress injuries; in a word, to maintain and reunite the ties of order throughout the country.

By the execution of this salutary plan, you will, without doubt, have done much towards the happiness of these people; but not enough for your own honour. One prejudice you have still to conquer, and that victory is worthy of yourselves. Venture to put your new subjects into a situation to enjoy the sweets of property. Portion out to them the fields on which they were born: they will learn to cultivate them for themselves. Attached to you by these favours, more than ever they were by fear, they will pay with joy the tribute you impose with moderation. They will instruct their children to adore, and admire your government; and successive generations will transmit down, with their inheritance, the sentiments of their happiness mixed with that of their gratitude.

THEN shall the friends of mankind applaud your success; they will indulge the hope of seeing prosperity once more revive in a country embellished by nature, and no longer ravaged by despotism. It will be pleasing to them to think that the calamities which afflicted those fertile countries are for ever removed from them. They will pardon in you those usurpations, which have been only set on foot for the sake of despoiling tyrants; and they will invite you to new conquests, when they see the influence of your excellent constitution of government extending itself even to the very extremities of Asia, to give birth to liberty, property, and happiness.

B O O K IV.

*Voyages, Settlements, Wars, and Trade, of the French
in the East-Indies.*B O O K
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Ancient
revolutions
of com-
merce in
France.

THE ancient Gauls, almost always at war with each other, had no other intercourse but such as savage nations, whose wants are always few, can have with each other. Their connections abroad were still more circumscribed. Some navigators from Vannes carried earthen-ware to Great Britain, where they bartered it for dogs, slaves, tin, and furs. Such of these articles as they could not dispose of at home, were conveyed to Marseilles, and there exchanged for wines, stuffs, and spices, which were brought thither by traders from Italy or Greece.

THIS kind of traffic was not carried on by all the Gauls. It appears from Cæsar's account, that the inhabitants of Belgia had prohibited the importation of all foreign commodities, as tending to corrupt their morals. They thought their own soil sufficiently fruitful to answer all their wants. The Celtic and Aquitanian Gauls were not so strict. To enable them to pay for the commodities they might procure from the Mediterranean, and for which their desire was continually increasing, they had recourse to a kind of labour that had never before occurred to them; they collected with great care all the gold dust that

was

was brought down with the sand along the stream of several of their rivers.

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THOUGH the Romans had neither a turn for trade, nor held it in any kind of estimation, it necessarily increased in Gaul, after they had subdued, and in some measure civilized it. Sea-ports were established at Arles, Narbonne, Bourdeaux, and other places. Magnificent roads were every where made, the ruins of which we still behold with astonishment. Every navigable river had its company of merchants, to whom considerable privileges were granted. These were called *Nautes*, and were the agents and springs of a general circulation.

THIS rising spirit was checked by the inroads of the Franks and other barbarous nations; nor was it restored to its former activity, even when these robbers had established themselves in their conquests. To their savage fury succeeded an unbounded passion for wealth, to gratify which, they had recourse to every kind of oppression. Every boat that came to a town was to pay a duty for entrance, another for the salute, a third for the bridge, a fourth for approaching the shore, a fifth for anchorage, a sixth for leave to unload, and a seventh for store-room. Land carriages were not more favourably treated, and were exposed to the insufferable tyranny of custom-house officers, who were dispersed all over the country. These excesses were carried so far, that sometimes the goods brought to market did not produce enough to pay the expences incurred before the sale of them. A total discouragement was the necessary consequence of such enormities.

CLOYSTERS soon became the only places where industry prevailed, and manufactures were carried on. The monks were not then corrupted by idleness, intrigue, and debauchery. Useful labours filled up the vacancies of an edifying and retired life. The most humble

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humble and robust of them shared the toils of agriculture with their servants. Those to whom nature had imparted less strength, or more understanding applied themselves to the cultivation of the neglected and abandoned arts. All of them in silence and retirement were engaged in the service of their country, whose substance their successors have incessantly devoured, and disturbed its tranquillity.

DAGOBERT excited the spirit of his countrymen in the seventh century. Fairs were opened, to which the Saxons flocked with tin and lead from England; the Jews with jewels and gold or silver plate; the Sclavonians with all the metals of the north; traders from Lombardy, Provence, and Spain with the commodities of their respective countries, and those they received from Africa, Egypt, and Syria; and merchants of every province in the kingdom, with whatever their soil and their industry afforded. Unfortunately this prosperity was of a short duration; it disappeared under indolent kings, but revived under Charlemagne.

THAT prince, who might without flattery be ranked with the greatest men recorded in history, had he not been sometimes influenced by sanguinary schemes of conquest, and sullied with acts of persecution and tyranny, seemed to follow the footsteps of those first Romans, who made rural labours a relaxation from the fatigues of war. He applied himself to the care of his vast domains, with that closeness and skill which would hardly be expected from the most assiduous man in a private station. All the great men of the state followed his example, and devoted themselves to husbandry, and to those arts which attend, or are immediately connected with it. From that period the French had plenty of their own productions to barter, and could with great ease make them circulate throughout the immense empire, which was then subject to their dominion. So

So flourishing a situation presented a fresh allure-ment to the Normans to indulge the inclination they had for piracy. Those barbarians, accustomed to seek from plunder that wealth which their soil did not afford, came in multitudes out of their inhospitable climate in quest of booty. They attacked all the sea-coasts but those of France, which promised the richest spoil, with the greatest violence. The ravages they committed, with the cruelties they exercised, the flames they kindled for a whole century in those fertile provinces, cannot be remembered without horror. During that fatal period nothing was thought of but how to escape slavery or death. There was no commutation between the several parts of the kingdom, and consequently no trade.

IN the mean-time the nobles, intrusted with the administration of the provinces, had insensibly made themselves masters of them, and had found means to make their authority hereditary. They had not, indeed, thrown off all dependence on the head of the empire; but, retaining the modest appellation of vassals, they were not much less formidable to the state than the kings in the neighbourhood of its frontiers. They were confirmed in their usurpations at the memorable æra when the sceptre was removed from the family of Charlemagne to that of the Capets. From that time there were no longer any national assemblies, no tribunals, no laws, no government. In that fatal confusion, the sword usurped the place of justice, and the free citizens were forced to embrace servitude, to purchase the protection of a chief who was able to defend them.

COMMERCE could not possibly flourish when loaded with the shackles of slavery, and in the midst of the continual disturbances occasioned by the most cruel anarchy. Industry is the child of peace; nothing depresses it so much as servitude. Genius languishes when

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when it is not animated by hope and emulation ; and neither of these can subsist where there is no property. Nothing is a stronger recommendation of liberty, or more fully proves the rights of mankind, than the impossibility of working successfully to enrich barbarous masters.

SEVERAL of the kings of France entertained some idea of this important truth ; they attempted to abridge the power of those petty tyrants, who, by ruining their unfortunate vassals, kept up the calamities of the monarchy. St. Lewis was the first who introduced trade into the system of government. Before his time it was only a work of chance and circumstances. He brought it under the regulation of stated laws ; and he himself drew up statutes, which have served as a model for those that have since been enacted.

THESE first steps led the way to measures of greater importance. The old law, which forbade the exportation of all productions of the kingdom, was still in force, and agriculture was discouraged by this absurd prohibition. The wise monarch removed these fatal impediments ; expecting, not without reason, that a free exportation would restore to the nation those treasures which his imprudent expedition into Asia had lavished.

SOME political events seconded these salutary views. Before the reign of St. Lewis, the kings of France had but few ports on the ocean, and none on the Mediterranean. The northern coasts were divided between the Counts of Flanders and the Dukes of Burgundy, Normandy, and Bretagne : the rest belonged to the English. The southern coasts were possessed by the Counts of Toulouse, and the Kings of Majorca, Aragon, and Castile. By this arrangement, the inland provinces had little or no communication with the foreign markets. The union of the county of Toulouse

louse with the crown removed this great obstacle, at least for a part of the French territory.

PHILIP, the son of St. Lewis, desirous of improving the advantages of this union, endeavoured to draw to Nîmes, a city under his jurisdiction, part of the trade carried on at Montpellier, which belonged to the king of Arragon. The privileges he granted produced the desired effect; but it was soon found to be an object of little consequence. The Italians supplied the kingdom with spices, perfumes, silks, and all the rich stuffs of the East. The arts had not made such progress in France as to admit of the manufactures being used in exchange; and the produce of agriculture was not sufficient to defray so many expences of luxury. A trade of such value could not be carried on without money, and there was but little in the kingdom, especially since the Crusades; though France was not so poor as most of the other European nations.

PHILIP, surnamed The Fair, was sensible of these truths; he found means to improve agriculture so as to answer the demands of foreign importations; and these he reduced, by establishing new manufactures, and improving the old ones. Under this reign the ministry first undertook to guide the hand of the artist, and to direct his labours. The breadth, the quality, and the dressing of the cloths were fixed; the exportation of wool, which the neighbouring nations came to purchase in order to manufacture it, was prohibited. These were the best measures that could be taken in those times of ignorance.

SINCE that period the progress of the arts was proportioned to the decay of feudal tyranny. The French, however, did not begin to form their taste, till the time of their expeditions into Italy. They were dazzled with a thousand new objects that presented themselves at Genoa, Venice, and Florence. The
strictness

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strictness observed by Anne of Bretagne under the reigns of Charles VIII. and Lewis XII. at first restrained the conquerors from giving full scope to their propensity for imitation; but no sooner had Francis I. invited the women to court, no sooner had Catharine of Medicis crossed the Alps, than the great affected an elegance unknown before since the first foundation of the monarchy. The whole nation was led by this alluring example of luxury, and the improvement of the manufactures was the natural consequence.

FROM Henry II. to Henry IV. the civil wars, the unhappy divisions of religion, the ignorance of government, the spirit of finance which began to have its influence in the council; the barbarous and devouring avarice of men in business, encouraged by the protection they enjoyed; all these several causes retarded the progress of industry, but could never destroy it. It revived with fresh splendour under the frugal administration of Sully. It was almost extinguished under those of Richlieu and Mazarine, both governed by the farmers of the revenue; one wholly taken up with his ambition for empire and his spirit of revenge, the other with intrigue and plunder.

First voyage
of the
French to
the East-Indies.

No king of France had ever seriously considered the advantages that might accrue from a trade to India, nor had the emulation of the French been excited by the lustre which other nations derived from it. They consumed more eastern productions than any other nation; they were as favourably situated for procuring them at the first hand; and yet they were content to pay to foreign industry what their own might as well have partaken of.

SOME merchants of Rouen had ventured, indeed, in 1535, upon a small expedition; but Genonville, who commanded it, met with violent storms at the
Cape

Cape of Good Hope, was cast upon unknown lands, and with much difficulty got back to Europe. BOOK
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IN 1601 a society formed in Bretagne fitted out two ships, to endeavour to get a shore, if possible, of the riches of the East, which the Portuguese, the English, and the Dutch, were contending for. Pyrard, who commanded these ships, arrived at the Maldives, and did not return to his own country till after an unfortunate navigation of ten years.

A NEW company, headed by one Girard, a native of Flanders, fitted out some ships from Normandy for the island of Java, in 1616 and 1619. They returned with cargoes sufficient to indemnify the adventurers, but not enough to encourage them to any fresh undertakings.

CAPTAIN Reginon, upon the expiration of this fruitless grant in 1633, prevailed upon some merchants of Dieppe, two years after to enter upon a track which might be productive of great riches, if properly pursued. Fortune baffled the endeavours of the new adventurers. The only advantage gained by these repeated expeditions, was the high opinion that was conceived of the island of Madagascar, discovered by the Portuguese in 1506.

THIS gave rise to a company in 1642, which was to make a considerable settlement on that island, to secure to their ships the necessary refreshments for sailing further.

UPON a survey of the island, it was found to be situated along the eastern coast of Africa; it was three hundred and thirty-six leagues long, and one hundred and twenty broad in the widest part, and about eight hundred in circumference. By whatever wind a ship is brought there, nothing but dreary and barren sands are to be seen; but at a greater distance from the shore the soil is sometimes black, sometimes reddish, mostly fruitful, and every where watered by a great number

Settlement
of the
French on
Madagascar.
Description
of that
island.

number of rivers. Vegetation is here very quick; the soil requires little labour, and naturally produces rice, potatoes, bananas, pine-apples, indigo, hemp, cotton, silk, sugar, palm-trees, cocoa-trees, orange-trees, gum-trees, and timber fit for building, and for every use. The pastures are excellent, and are covered with oxen of the largest kind, and sheep exactly resembling those of Barbary.

THE island of Madagascar is divided into a great many provinces; each of them has a chief called *Dian*, which answers to the word Lord. All the ensigns of his dignity are his slaves and his flocks. His place is hereditary; but, in default of heirs, it devolves upon the oldest of his delegates. His council is composed of some magistrates whom he makes choice of; and the rest, which is the greatest number, reside in the villages, to preserve peace, and administer justice. He can neither declare war without their consent, nor support it without the voluntary contribution and actual assistance of his people.

SUCH is the general form of government in the island; the province of Anossi alone differs from it, having been possessed by the Arabs for several centuries past. Though few in number, they soon became the strongest, and divided the country into twenty-two districts, each of which had a ruler of their own nation, to whom they gave the Name of *Boandrian*, or descendant of Abraham. These petty sovereigns are continually at war with each other, but never fail to unite against the other princes of Madagascar, who hold them in detestation, as being foreigners and usurpers. This is of all the island that part which is the most destitute of morals, activity, industry, and bravery, because it is the only one where there is no liberty.

SOME of the French settled at Fort Dauphin, in the country of Anossi, have lately in their excursions discovered a new race of men, called *Kimos*, the tallest of
whom

whom are not above four feet high. They inhabit about forty villages in the interior parts, towards the north-west of the island. They are said to be more mischievous than their neighbours, and, what appears very extraordinary, not so cowardly. They never stir out of their mountains, nor suffer any one to penetrate into them.

THE other inhabitants of Madagascar are tall, nimble, and have a haughty appearance. They will mask a deep design, or a strong passion, under a smiling face, as artfully as any knave in a civilized nation. They are ignorant of the origin of their laws, but observe them with great exactness. The old men who are intrusted with the care of enforcing them, never take any fee for the trial of a criminal, and think themselves sufficiently rewarded if they can rid their country of a malefactor. In civil causes the parties bring them so many head of cattle, in proportion to the importance of the affair.

THE offence that is most frequently brought before these magistrates is theft. Notwithstanding the custom of boring the hand of the person convicted of this crime, the propensity to theft prevails universally. The inhabitants ever afraid of their property live in continual mistrust of each other. For their mutual security, they seal their engagements with the most solemn oaths. They are so accustomed to these formalities, that they practise them even when they have any transactions with Europeans. On these important occasions, he who represents the nation puts into a vessel, filled with brandy, some gold, silver, gun-flint, if possible some of the dust of the tomb of his ancestors, and frequently blood, which, after the manner of the ancient Scythians, the parties draw out of their own arms by incision. During these preparatives, their weapons are laid on the ground in the form of a cross. Soon after, both parties take them up, and hold them

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them with the point in the cup, constantly stirring the contents till the agreement is made. Then the contracting parties, the witnesses, and the spectators, all drink out of the cup till it is empty; after which they embrace and retire.

RELIGIOUS principles do not restrain the people of Madagascar from acts of injustice. Though in general they admit the prevailing doctrine of the two principles, they have but a confused notion of it, nor have they any form of worship whatever. Notwithstanding this indifference for religion, they are addicted to every kind of superstition. In their uncouth notions of astrology they neither see, nor imagine, any thing which they do not connect with futurity.

THE most dangerous of all their prejudices is, doubtless, the distinction between lucky and unlucky days. They inhumanely put to death all children born on the unlucky day. This destructive principle is one cause among many others which prevents the population of this country.

THOSE who do not fall victims to this cruel superstition are generally circumcised at the age of two years, or twenty-four moons, as they express it. The ceremony is performed with all possible solemnity. While the operation is performing, one of the child's parents holds a cup under the sacred knife; and the most distinguished of the uncles swallows the part of the prepuce that has been cut off. The rest of the family, and the bystanders, dip a finger into the blood, and taste it. These singular mysteries are concluded with festivity, dancing, and pleasures of all kinds.

THE people of Madagascar never receive any kind of education, and marry as soon as they attain to the state of manhood. A man of the lower class, even a slave, takes as many wives as he pleases, or as many as he can find. Persons in higher stations have but one lawful wife; but in order to vary their pleasures they keep

concubines. They all put away their wives whenever they dislike them; and both parties are at full liberty to marry again, or to remain single.

THE people of Madagascar lead an idle and dissolute life, and seldom arrive at old age. An unwholesome climate, bad food, constant debauchery, the want of proper assistance, together with other causes, concur to hasten their end. When a man dies, the whole neighbourhood is apprized of it by lamentations, expressed in one continued mournful strain. The relations meet, and partake of the most profuse entertainments, whilst the most affectionate of the slaves keeps asking the deceased, "What could induce him to quit all that was dear to him." After eight days the corpse is buried with the choicest jewels of the deceased, who is not even then forgotten. The respect for ancestors is incredible in those barbarous regions. It is no uncommon thing, to see men of all ages weep over the tombs of their fathers, and ask their advice in the most important occurrences of life.

THE common food of the inhabitants of Madagascar is rice, which multiplies a hundred fold, though no pains are taken in cultivating it. Their drink is a kind of mead, and wine made with sugar and banana. Their greatest finery is a pagné over their shoulders, and another round their waist.

MADAGASCAR had been visited by the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the English; who had despised it, finding none of those objects which brought them to the East. The French, who seemed to have no determinate object in view, spent that capital they had reserved for the purpose of trade, in subduing the island. They found some gold scattered in one corner of it, and directly concluded there must be gold mines, never suspecting that this metal, the quantity of which was continually decreasing, might have been brought

thither by the Arabs. They were punished for their greediness, by the loss of their whole stock. At the expiration of their grant they had nothing left but a few tenements, situated in five or six different parts of the coast, built of boards covered with leaves, surrounded with stakes, and decorated with the pompous name of forts, because they mounted a few bad pieces of cannon. Their defenders were reduced to about a hundred robbers, who by their cruelties daily increased the hatred conceived against their nation. The whole of their conquests amounted to a few small districts, forsaken by the natives : and some few larger ones, from whence they forcibly extorted a tribute of provisions.

MARSHAL de la Meilleraie seized upon these ruins, and conceived the project of restoring this ill-conducted undertaking for his own private emolument. He had so little success, that his property sold but for 20,000 livres, (875*l.*) which was full as much as it was worth.

AT last, in 1664, Colbert presented Lewis XIV. a plan for an East India Company. Agriculture was then so flourishing in France, and industry so animated, that this branch of commerce seemed to be needless. The minister was of a different opinion ; he foresaw that the other European nations would follow his example, and set up manufactures of their own, and would also have another advantage over them by their connections in the East Indies. This was considered as an instance of deep penetration, and an East India company was accordingly created, vested with all the privileges enjoyed by the Dutch East India company. Colbert went still further ; and, considering that in order to carry on great commercial undertakings there must always be a certain confidence in republics, which cannot be expected in monarchies, had recourse to every expedient that could produce it.

A CHARTER

A CHARTER was granted for fifty years, that the company might be encouraged to form great settlements, with a prospect of reaping the fruits of them.

ALL foreigners advancing 20,000 livres (875l.) were to be deemed Frenchmen, without being naturalized.

ON the like terms, officers, whatever corps they belonged to, were allowed leave of absence, without forfeiting the rights of their post, or their pay.

WHATEVER was wanted for the building, equipment or victualling of the ships, was to be entered duty-free, and be exempt from all duties to the admiralty.

THE government engaged to pay fifty livres (2l. 3s. 9d.) per ton for all goods exported from France to India, and seventy-five livres (3l. 5s. 7d. $\frac{1}{2}$) for every ton imported from thence.

THE government entered into engagements, to defend the settlements of the company with a sufficient military force, and to convoy their outward and homeward bound ships, with as a strong a squadron as exigencies should require.

THE reigning passion of the nation was made subservient to this establishment. Hereditary titles and honours were promised to such as should distinguish themselves in the service of the company.

As trade was yet in its infancy in France, and was unable to furnish the fifteen millions (above 656,200l.) that were to constitute the stock of the new society, the ministry engaged to lend as far as three millions (131,256l.) The nobles, the magistrates, all orders of men, were invited to share the rest. The nation, proud to please their king, who had not yet crushed them with the weight of his false greatness, came into the proposal with great eagerness.

THE persisting in the resolution of forming a settlement at Madagascar deprived the company of the

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benefit of the first voyage. They were at length obliged to relinquish that island, whose savage and unconquerable inhabitants could not be reconciled either, to the commodities, the worship, or the manners of Europe.

At that period it was, that the company's ships began to sail directly to India. By the intrigues of Marcara, a native of Ispahan, but in the French interest, they obtained leave to establish factories on several places on the coast of the peninsula. They even attempted to secure a share of the Japan trade. Colbert offered to send none but protestants; but by the artifices of the Dutch, the French were denied an entrance into that empire, as the English had been before.

The French make Surat the center of their trade.

SURAT had been pitched upon for the center of all the business which the company was to carry on in those parts. It was from that capital of Guzarat that all orders to be were issued for the inferior settlements. Thither all goods destined for Europe were to be brought.

Account of this famous city, and of the province of Guzarat in which it is situated.

GUZARAT forms a peninsula between the Indus and Malabar. It is about one hundred and sixty miles in length, and much the same in breadth. It is separated from the kingdom of Agra by the mountains of Marva. It rains there incessantly from June to September; at all other times the sky is so clear, that scarce a cloud is to be seen. The burning heat of the sun, however, is happily tempered by refreshing dews, which cool the air and moisten the ground. The richness of a soil abounding in corn, rice, sugar, cotton, cattle, game, fruits of all kinds continually succeeding each other, added to a variety of important manufactures, was sufficient for the happiness of the inhabitants; when, in the beginning of the eighth century, strangers came and introduced new branches of industry among them.

SOME

SOME Persians, who were persecuted for their opinions by the Saracens their conquerors, took refuge in the isle of Ormus, whence they sailed some time after for India, and landed at Diu. In this asylum they continued only nineteen years, and then embarked again. They were driven by the winds upon a pleasant shore between Daman and Baçaim. The prince who governed that country consented to receive them as his subjects, on condition that they should reveal the mysteries of their belief, that they should lay down their arms, that they should speak the Indian language, that their women should go abroad unveiled, and that they should celebrate their nuptials at the close of the evening, according to the custom of the country. As these stipulations contained nothing repugnant to their religious notions, the people who fled there for protection agreed to them. A piece of ground was allotted them, where they built a town, whence they soon spread further up the country.

A HABIT of labour happily contracted by necessity had made both the lands and the manufacturers prosper in their hands. They were so wise as not to interfere with government or war, and enjoyed a profound tranquillity in the midst of all the revolutions that happened from time to time. In consequence of this circumspection, and of the affluence in which they lived, they multiplied very fast. They always remained a separate people, distinguished by the name of Parfes, never inter-marrying with the Indians, and adhering to the principles which had occasioned their banishment. Their tenets were those of Zoroaster, somewhat altered by time, ignorance, and the rapaciousness of the priests.

THE prosperity of Guzarat, partly owing to the exiled Persians, excited the ambition of two formidable powers. Whilst the Portuguese annoyed it on the side of the sea by the ravages they committed,

ted, by the victories they gained, and by the conquest of Diu, justly esteemed the bulwark of the kingdom; the Moguls, already masters of the north of India, and eager to advance towards the southern parts where trade and riches were to be found, threatened it from the continent.

BADUR, a Patan by birth, who then reigned over Guzarat, saw how impossible it would be for him at once to withstand two such enemies, both bent upon his destruction. He thought he had less to fear from a people whose forces were separated from their dominions by immense seas, than from a nation firmly settled on the frontiers of his provinces. This consideration made him determine to be reconciled with the Portuguese. The concessions he made induced them to join with him against Akbar, whose activity and courage they dreaded little less than he did.

THIS alliance disconcerted men who thought they had only Indians to deal with. They could not think of engaging with Europeans, who were reputed invincible. The natives, not yet recovered from the consternation into which these conquerors had thrown them, represented them to the Mogul soldiers as men come down from heaven, or risen from the waters, of a species infinitely superior to the Asiatics, and far surpassing them in valour, genius, and knowledge. The army, seized with a panic was urging the generals to march back to Delhi, when Akbar, convinced that a prince who undertakes a great conquest must command his own troops, hastened to his camp. He did not hesitate to promise his troops that they should subdue a people enervated by luxury, riches, pleasures, and the heat of the climate; and that the glory of purging Asia of that handful of banditti was reserved for them. The army, thus encouraged, expressed their satisfaction, and marched on with confidence. They soon came to an engagement; the Portuguese, ill seconded by
their

their allies, were surrounded and cut to pieces. Badur fled, and never returned. All the cities of Guzarat hastened to open their gates to the conqueror. This fine kingdom in 1565 became a province of that vast empire which was soon to subdue all Indostan.

UNDER the Mogul government, which was then in its full glory, Guzarat enjoyed more tranquillity than before. The manufactures were multiplied at Cambaya, Amadabat, Broitschia, and several other places. New ones were set up in those towns which were yet unacquainted with this branch of industry. The culture of lands was improved, and their productions increased. That part of Malabar which borders upon Guzarat, long since tired of the impositions of the Portuguese, brought their linen cloths thither. The goods manufactured on the banks of the Indus were likewise sent to this country, as they could not conveniently be conveyed down the river, the stream being too rapid above to land them, and below the waters discharging into the sea by so many channels, that they are in a manner lost in the sands.

ALL these riches centered at Surat, which stands on the river Tapta, a few miles from the ocean. This city was indebted for this advantage to a fort, which protected the merchants, and to its harbour, the best on that coast, though not an excellent one. The Moguls, who had then no other maritime town, drew all their articles of luxury from thence; and the Europeans, who had not at that time any of the great settlements they have since made at Bengal and on the coast of Coromandel, bought most of their Indian commodities at that place. They were all collected there, as the people of Surat had taken care to procure a navy superior to that of their neighbours.

THEIR ships, which were exceedingly durable, were mostly of a thousand or twelve hundred tons burthen. They were built of a very strong wood called Teak.

Insteast

Instead of launching them with a costly apparatus and complicated engines, they let the tide into the dock, and it set them afloat. The cordage was made of the bark of the cocoa-tree; it was rougher and less pliable than ours, but at least as strong. Their cotton sails were neither so strong nor so lasting as our hempen ones, but more pliable and less apt to be torn. Instead of pitch, they made use of the gum of a tree called Damar, which was, perhaps, preferable. The skill of their officers, though but moderate, was sufficient for the seas and the seasons in which they sailed. As to their sailors, called Lascars, the Europeans have found them serviceable in their voyages from one part of India to another. They have even been employed successfully in bringing home into our stormy latitudes such ships as had lost their crews.

So many united advantages had brought to Surat a great concourse of Moguls, Indians, Persians, Arabs, Armenians, Jews, and Europeans. We hardly suspected that commerce was founded on any certain principles, while these principles were already known and practised in this part of Asia. The value of money was very low, and it was easily obtained; and bills of exchange might be had for every market in India. Insurances for the most distant navigations were very common. Such was the honesty of these traders, that bags of money, ticketed and sealed by the bankers, would circulate for years, without ever being counted or weighed. Fortunes were proportionable to the facility with which they were to be acquired by trade. Those of five or six millions (about 240,000*l.* on an average) were not uncommon, and some were even more considerable.

THESE fortunes were mostly possessed by the Bani-
nians, a set of traders who were noted for their honesty.
A few moments were sufficient for them to transact the
most important business. In the most intricate discus-
sions,

sions, they preserved an evenness of temper and a politeness which can hardly be conceived.

THEIR children, who assisted at all bargains, were early trained up to this gentleness of manners. Upon the first dawning of reason, they were initiated into all the mysteries of trade. It was a common thing to see a child, of ten or twelve years old, able to supply his father's place. What a contrast, what a distance, between this and the education of our children; and yet, what a difference between the attainments of the Indians and the progress of our knowledge!

SUCH of the Banians as had Abyssinian slaves, and very few of these good-natured men had any, treated them with such humanity as must appear very singular to us. They brought them up as if they had been of their own family, trained them to business, advanced them money to enable them to trade for themselves, and not only suffered them to enjoy the profits, but even allowed them to dispose of them in favour of their descendants, if they had any.

THE expences of the Banians were not proportioned to their fortunes. As they were restrained by the principles of their religion from eating meat or drinking strong liquors, they lived upon fruits, and a few plain dishes. They never departed from this frugality but upon the settlement of their children. On this single occasion, no expence was spared for the entertainment, or for the music, dancing, and fireworks. Their whole ambition was to tell how much the wedding had cost. Sometimes it amounted to a hundred thousand crowns (13,125l.)

EVEN their women had a taste for this simplicity of manners. All their glory consisted in pleasing their husbands. Perhaps, the great veneration in which they held the nuptial tie arose from the custom of marrying them in their earliest infancy. That sentiment was in their opinion the most sacred part of their

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their religion. They never did allow themselves the least conversation with strangers. Less reserve would not have satisfied their husbands, who could not hear without astonishment of the familiarity that prevailed between the two sexes in Europe. When they were told that this freedom was attended with no ill consequence, they were not convinced; but shook their heads, and answered by one of their proverbs, which signifies, *That if you bring butter too near the fire, you can hardly keep it from melting.*

EXCEPTING the Moguls, who were in possession of all places under the government, were very extravagant in their stables, their baths, and their seraglios, and ran into every kind of indulgence to drown the sense of despotism under which they lived; all the merchants of Surat conformed to the frugality of the Banians, as far as the difference of religion would admit. Their greatest expence was the decorating of their houses.

THESE were contrived in the best manner to guard against the heat of the climate. The outside walls were covered with beautiful wainscoting, and the inside ones, as well as the ceilings, inlaid with porcelain. The panes of their windows were shell or mother of pearl, which tempered the glare of the sun without too much obstructing the light. The apartments were neatly disposed and furnished, suitably to the customs of the country; and one of the rooms was distinguished from the rest by a fountain of water spouting up from a marble basin, whose gentle murmurs invited the company to soft slumbers.

DURING their repose, the common indulgence of the inhabitants of Surat was to stretch themselves upon a sofa, where they were rubbed by men of singular dexterity, or rather kneaded, if we may be allowed the expression, like dough. The necessity of promoting the circulation of the fluids, too often retard-
ed

ed by the heat of the climate, first suggested the notion of this exercise, which affords them an infinite variety of delightful sensations. They fall into such a state of languor, that they sometimes almost faint away. This custom was said to be brought into India from China; and some epigrams of Martial, and declamations of Seneca, seem to hint that it was not unknown to the Romans at the time when they refined upon every pleasure, as the tyrants who enslaved those masters of the world afterwards refined upon every torture.

THEY had another species of pleasure at Surat, which, perhaps, our effeminacy would have envied them still more; and this was their female dancers, whom the Europeans call *Balladieres*, a name given them by the Portuguese.

NUMBERS of these are collected together in seminaries of pleasure. The most accomplished of these societies are devoted to the richest and most frequented Pagodas. Their destination is to dance in the temples on their great festivals, and to be subservient to the pleasures of the Bramins. These priests, who have not taken the artful and deceitful vow of renouncing the enjoyment of all pleasures in order to have the opportunity of indulging in them more freely, chuse rather to have women of their own, than at once to defile celibacy and wedlock. They do not invade another man's right by adultery, but are jealous of the dancers, whose worship and vows they share with the gods; but they never suffer them without reluctance to contribute to the amusement even of kings and great men.

THE rise of this singular institution is not known. Probably, one Bramin who had a concubine or a wife, associated with another Bramin, who had likewise his concubine or his wife; and, in process of time, the mixture of so many Bramins and women occasioned such

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such confusion, that the women came to be common to all those priests. Let but a number of single persons of both sexes be collected in a cloyster, and a commonality of men and women will soon take place.

By this mutual intercourse, a jealousy was probably extinguished; and the women were not uneasy at the increase of their numbers, nor the Bramins at that of their order. It was rather a new conquest than a rivalry.

It is no less probable, that, in order to palliate the infamy of this licentiousness in the eyes of the people, all women were consecrated to the service of the altars; and that the people readily consented to this kind of superstition, as it insured their wives and daughters from seduction, by confining the lawless desires of these monks to one particular spot.

THE contrivance of stamping a sacred character upon these courtezans, might possibly make parents the more willing to part with their beautiful daughters, and to consent that they should follow their calling, and devote themselves to these seminaries, from whence the superannuated women might return to society without disgrace: for there is no crime that may not be sanctified, no virtue that may not be debased, by the intervention of the gods. The very notion of a Supreme Being may, in the hands of a crafty priest, be made subversive of all morality. He will affirm, not that such a thing is pleasing to the gods, because it is good; but that such a thing is good, because it is pleasing to the gods.

THE Bramins wanted only to gain another point in order to complete this institution; which was to persuade the people that it was decent, holy, and pleasing to the gods, to marry a balladiere in preference to all other women, and thereby induce them to solicit the remains of their debaucheries as a particular mark of favour.

IN every city there are other Companies, not so well instructed as the former, for the amusement of the rich. The Moors and Gentiles may equally procure a sight of these dancers at their country-houses, or in their public assemblies. There are even strolling companies of them, conducted by old women, who, having been themselves trained up in these seminaries, in time are promoted to the direction of them.

THESE handsome girls have the custom, as singular as it is disgusting, of being always followed by an old deformed musician, whose employment is to beat time with an instrument of brass, which the Europeans have lately borrowed of the Turks to add to their military music, and which in India is called a *tam*. The man who holds it is continually repeating that word with such vehemence, that by degrees he works himself up into dreadful convulsions; whilst the balladieres, intoxicated with the desire of pleasing, and the sweets with which they are perfumed, at length lose their senses.

THEIR dances are, in general, love pantomimes: the plan, the design, the attitudes, the time, the airs, the cadence, all is expressive of this passion, with all its raptures and extravagances.

EVERY thing conspires to the amazing success of these voluptuous women; the art and richness of their attire, as well as their ingenuity in setting off their beauty. Their long black hair falling over their shoulders, or braided and turned up, is loaded with diamonds, and stuck with flowers. Their necklaces and bracelets are enriched with precious stones. Even their nose jewels, an ornament which shocks us at first sight, has something pleasing in it, and sets off all the other ornaments by a certain symmetry, whose effect, though inexplicable, is yet sensibly felt by degrees.

NOTHING can equal the care they take to preserve their

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their breasts, as one of the most striking marks of their beauty. To prevent them from growing large or ill-shaped, they inclose them in two cases made of an exceeding light wood, which are joined together, and buckled behind. These cases are so smooth and so supple, that they give way to the various attitudes of the body, without being flattened, and without injuring the delicacy of the skin. The outside of these cases is covered with a leaf of gold studded with diamonds. This is certainly one of the most refined kind of ornaments, and the best calculated to preserve beauty. They take it off and put it on again with singular facility. This covering of the breast does not prevent the palpitations, heavings, and tender emotions of it from being perceived: it conceals nothing that can contribute to excite desire.

MOST of these dancers imagine it an addition to the beauty of their complexion, and the impression of their looks, to trace a black circle round their eyes with a hair bodkin, dipped in the powder of antimony. This borrowed beauty, celebrated by all the eastern poets, appeared very singular at first to the Europeans; but custom has reconciled them to it.

THE whole life, the whole employment, the whole felicity of the balladiers consists in the art of pleasing. It is not easy to resist their seducing manners. They are even preferred to those beauties of Caffimere, which fill the seraglios of Indostan, as the fair Georgians and Circassians do those of Ispahan and Constantinople. The modesty, or rather the reserve of proud slaves, sequestered from the society of men, cannot balance the arts of these expert courtezans.

THEY were no where so much in repute as at Surat, the richest and most populous city in India. It began to decline in 1664; and was pillaged by the famous Sevagi, who carried off twenty-five or thirty millions (about 1,200,000*l.* on an average.) The plunder would

would have been infinitely greater, had not the English and Dutch escaped the public calamity, by the care they had taken to fortify their factories, and had not the most valuable effects been lodged in the castle, which was out of the enemy's reach. This loss made the inhabitants more cautious. They built walls round the city, to prevent the like misfortunes; the effects of which were removed, when the English, in 1686, with shameful and inexcusable rapacity, stopped all the ships that were fitting out at Surat to be dispatched to the several seas. This piracy which lasted three years, deprived this famous mart of almost every branch of trade that was not its own peculiar property. The town was nearly reduced to its own natural riches.

OTHER pirates have since infested those latitudes, and from time to time disturbed the trade of Surat. Even their caravans, that carried their merchandises to Agra, to Delhi, and all over the empire, were not always secured from the attacks of the subjects of the independent rajas, which they met with on the several roads. They had formerly recourse to a singular expedient for the security of their caravans, which was, to put them under the protection of a woman or child, of a race held sacred by the nations they dreaded. When the banditti appeared, the guardians of the caravans threatened to destroy themselves if they persisted in their resolution of plundering it, and actually did so if they did not yield to their remonstrances. These profligate men, who had not been restrained by respect of blood held sacred, were excommunicated, degraded, and cast out of their tribe. The dread of these severe punishments was sometimes a check upon avarice; but since universal commotions have prevailed in Indostan, no consideration can allay the thirst of gold.

NOTWITHSTANDING

NOTWITHSTANDING all these misfortunes, Surat is still a great trading city. The produce of the numberless manufactures all over Guzarat is deposited in its warehouses. A great part is carried into the inland countries; the rest is conveyed to all parts of the globe by constant voyages.

THE goods more commonly known are, 1st, Duties, a kind of coarse unbleached cloth, worn in Persia, Arabia, Abyssinia, and the eastern coast of Africa; and blue linens, which are disposed of in the same manner, and are likewise sold to the English and Dutch for their Guinea trade.

2. THE blue and white checks of Cambaya, which are worn for mantles in Arabia and Turkey: some are coarse, and some fine, and some even mixed with gold for the use of the rich.

3. THE white linens of Broitschia, so well known by the name of Bafras. As they are extremely fine, they make summer castans for the Turks and Persians. The sort of muslin, with a gold stripe at each end, with which they make their turbans, is manufactured at the same place.

4. THE printed callicoes of Amadabat, whose colours are as bright, as fine, and as durable, as those of Coromandel. They are worn in Persia, in Turkey, and in Europe. The rich people of Java, Sumatra, and the Molucca islands, make pagnes and coverlets of these chintzes.

5. THE gauzes of Biarapour; the blue ones are worn by the common people in Persia and Turkey for their summer cloathing, and the red ones by persons of higher rank. The Jews, who are not allowed by the Porte to wear white, make their turbans with these gauzes.

6. MIXED stuffs of silk and cotton, plain, striped, some with sattin stripes, some mixed with gold and silver.

silver. If they were not so dear, they would be esteemed even in Europe for the brightness of their colours, and the fine execution of the flowers, though their patterns are so indifferent. They soon wear out; but this is of little consequence in the seraglios of Turkey and Persia where they are used.

7. SOME are all silk, called tapis. These are pagnes of several colours, much esteemed in the eastern parts of India. Many more would be wove, if it had not been necessary to use foreign materials, which enhances the price too much.

8. SHAULS, very light, warm, and fine cloths, made of the wool of Cassimere. They are dyed of different colours, striped, and flowered. They are worn for a winter dress in Turkey, Persia, and the more temperate parts of India. With this fine wool turbans are woven, that are ell-wide, and a little more than three ells long, which sell from 2400 to 3600 livres (about 130l. on an average.) Though this wool is sometimes manufactured at Surat, the finest works of this kind are made at Cassimere.

BESIDES the prodigious quantity of cotton made use of in the manufactures of Surat, seven or eight thousand bales at least are annually sent to Bengal. Much more is sent to China, Persia, and Arabia, when the crops are very plentiful. If they are moderate, the overplus is carried down the Ganges, where it is always sold at a higher price.

THOUGH Surat receives, in exchange for her exports, porcelain from China; silk from Bengal and Persia; masts and pepper from Malabar; gums, dates, dried fruits, copper, and pearls, from Persia; perfumes and slaves from Arabia; great quantities of spices from the Dutch; iron, lead, cloth, cochineal, and some hard wares from the English; the balance is so much in her favour, as to bring in yearly twen-

ty-five or twenty-six millions of livres (on an average about 1,116,000l.) in ready money. The profit would be much greater, if the riches of the court of Delhi were not conveyed into another channel.

HOWEVER, this balance could never again rise to what it was when the French settled at Surat in 1668. Their leader was one Caron. He was a merchant of French extraction, who was grown old in the service of the Dutch company. Hamilton says, that this able man, who had ingratiated himself with the emperor of Japan, had obtained leave to build a house for his masters on the island where the factory stood which was under his direction. This building proved to be a castle. The natives, who knew nothing of fortification, did not entertain any suspicion of it. They surprized some pieces of cannon that were sending from Batavia, and informed the court of what was going forward. Caron was ordered to repair to Jeddo, to give an account of his conduct. As he had nothing reasonable to allege in his vindication, he was treated with great severity and contempt. They plucked off his beard by the roots, put him on a fool's cap and coat, and in this condition exposed him to the insults of the populace, and he was banished from the empire. The reception he met with at Java gave him a disgust against the interest he had espoused; and, actuated by revenge, he went over to the French, and became their agent.

Attack of
the French
upon the
islands of
Ceylon
and St
Thomas.
Their set-
tlement at
Pondicherry.

SURAT, where they had fixed him, did not answer his idea of a chief settlement. He disliked the situation; he lamented his being obliged to purchase his safety by submission; he foresaw it would be a disadvantage to carry on trade in competition with richer nations, who knew more, and were held in greater esteem, than themselves. He wished to find an independent port in the center of India, or in some of the
spice

spice islands, without which he thought it impossible for any company to support itself. The Bay of Trinquimale, in the island of Ceylon, appeared to him to unite all these advantages; and he accordingly sailed for that place with a powerful squadron, which had been sent him from Europe under the command of La Haye, who was to act under his direction. The French believed, or feigned to believe, that a settlement might be made there without encroaching upon the rights of the Dutch, whose property had never been acknowledged by the sovereign of the island, with whom they had entered into a treaty.

ALL that they alleged might indeed be true, but the event did not answer their expectation. They divulged a project which they ought to have kept a profound secret; they executed deliberately an expedition which ought to have been effected by surprize; they were intimidated by a fleet which was not in a condition to fight, and which could not possibly have received orders to hazard an engagement. The greater part of the ships crews and of the land forces perished by want and sickness; some men were left in a small fort they had erected, where they were soon compelled to surrender. With the remaining few who had survived the hardships of this expedition, they went in search of provisions on the coast of Coromandel; but finding none either at the Danish settlement of Tranquebar, or any where else, impelled by despair, they attacked St. Thomas, where they were informed there was great plenty.

THIS town, which had long been in a flourishing condition, had been built by the Portuguese above a hundred years before. The king of Golconda, having conquered the Carnatic, did not see without regret so important a place in foreign hands; he sent his generals to attack it in 1662, and they made

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themselves masters of it. The fortifications, though considerable and in good repair, did not stop the progress of the French, who took them by storm in 1672. They were soon attacked here, and were forced to surrender two years after; because the Dutch, who were at war with Lewis XIV. joined with the Indians to expel them.

THIS last event would have entirely ruined the enterprise, after all the expence the government had been at to support the company, had not Martin been one of the merchants sent on board La Haye's squadron. He collected the remains of the two colonies of Ceylon and St. Thomas, and with them he peopled the little town of Pondicherry, that had been lately ceded to him, and was rising to a city, when the company entertained good hopes of a new settlement which they had now an opportunity of forming in India.

Settlement
of the
French at
Siam.
Their de-
signs on
Tonquin
and Co-
chinchina.

SOME missionaries had preached the gospel at Siam. They had gained the love of the people by their doctrine and by their behaviour. Plain, good-natured, and humane men, without intrigue or avarice, they gave no jealousy to the government nor to the people; they had inspired them with respect and love for the French in general, and in particular for Lewis XIV.

A GREEK, of a restless and ambitious spirit, named Constantine Faulkon, in his travels to Siam, had so far engaged the affections of the prince, that in a short time he raised him to the post of prime minister, or barçalon, an office which nearly answers to the ancient *maires* of the palace of France.

FAULKON governed both the people and the king in the most despotic manner. The prince was weak, a valetudinarian, and had no issue. His minister conceived a project to succeed him; possibly to de-
throne

throne him. It is well known that these attempts are as easy and as frequent in absolute governments, as they are difficult and uncommon in countries where the prince governs by the rules of justice; where the origin and measure of his authority is regulated by fundamental and immutable laws, which are under the guardianship of numbers of able magistrates. There the enemies of the sovereign shew that they are enemies of the state; there they find themselves soon thwarted in their designs by all the forces of the nation; because, by rebelling against the chief, they rebel against the laws, which are the standing and immutable will of the nation.

FAULKON formed the design of making the French subservient to his scheme, as some ambitious men had formerly made use of a guard of six hundred Japanese, who had often disposed of the crown of Siam. He sent ambassadors into France in 1684, to make a tender of his master's alliance, to offer sea-ports to the French merchants, and to ask for ships and troops.

THE ostentatious vanity of Lewis XIV. took advantage of this embassy. The flatterers of that prince, who was too much extolled, though he deserved commendation, persuaded him that his fame, spread throughout the world, had procured to him the homage of the East. He did not content himself with the enjoyment of these vain honours; but endeavoured to improve the dispositions of the king of Siam to the benefit of the India company, and still more of the missionaries. He sent out a squadron in which there were a greater number of Jesuits than traders; and in the treaty which was concluded between the two kings, the French ambassadors, directed by the Jesuit Tachard, attended much

much more to the concerns of religion than to those of commerce.

THE company still entertained great hopes of the settlement at Siam, and these hopes were not ill grounded.

THAT kingdom, though divided by a ridge of mountains that is continued till it meets with the rocks of Tartary, is so prodigiously fruitful, that many of its cultivated lands yield two hundred times more than others. Some will even bear plentiful crops spontaneously. The corn collected as it was at first produced, without care and without trouble, left as it were to nature, falls off and perishes in the field where it grew, in order to vegetate again in the waters of the stream that flows through the kingdom.

THERE is, perhaps, no country where fruits grow in such plenty and variety, or are so wholesome, as in this delightful spot. Some are peculiar to the country; and those which are equally the produce of other countries have a much finer smell, and are much higher flavoured, than in any other part of the world.

THE earth, always covered with these treasures, which are constantly springing up afresh, also conceals, under a very thin surface, mines of gold, copper, loadstone, iron, lead, and calin, a species of tin which is highly valued throughout Asia.

ALL these advantages are rendered useless by the greatest tyranny. A prince corrupted by his power, while he is indulging in his seraglio, oppresses his people by his caprices, or suffers them to be oppressed by his indolence. At Siam there are no subjects, all are slaves. The men are divided into three classes: the first serve as a guard to the monarch, till his lands, and are employed in different manufactures in his palace. The second are appointed to public labours, and to the defence of the state. The third
class

class are destined to serve the magistrates, the ministers, and principal officers of the kingdom. No Siamese is advanced to any eminent post, but he is allowed a certain number of men who are at his disposal; so that the salaries annexed to great officers are well paid at the court of Siam, because they are not paid in money, but in men, who cost the prince nothing. These unfortunate people are registered at the age of sixteen. Every one on the first summons must repair to the post assigned him, upon pain of being put in irons, or condemned to the bastinado.

IN a country where all the men must work for the government during six months in the year, without being paid or subsisted, and the other six to earn a maintenance for the whole year; in such a country, the very lands must feel the effects of tyranny, and consequently there is no property. The delicious fruits that enrich the gardens of the monarch and the nobles, are not suffered to ripen in those of private men. If the soldiers who are sent out to examine the orchards discover some tree laden with choice fruits, they never fail to mark it for the tyrant's table, or that of his ministers. The owner becomes the guardian of it, and is answerable for the fruit under very severe penalties.

THE men are not only slaves to men, but to the very beasts. The king of Siam keeps a great number of elephants. Those of his palace are taken care of, and have extraordinary honours paid to them. The meanest have fifteen slaves to attend them, who are constantly employed in cutting hay, and gathering bananas and sugar-canes for them. The king takes so much pride in these creatures, which are of no real use, that he estimates his power rather by their number than by that of his provinces. Under pretence of feeding these animals well, their attendants will drive them

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them into gardens and cultivated lands, that they may trample upon them, unless the owners will purchase an exemption from these hardships by continual presents. No man would dare to inclose his field against the king's elephants, many of whom are decorated with honourable titles, and advanced to the highest dignities in the state.

SUCH various exertions of tyranny make the Siamese detest their native country, though they look upon it as the best upon earth. Most of them fly from oppression into the forests, where they lead a savage life, infinitely preferable to that of society corrupted by despotism. So great is this desertion, that, from the port of Mergui to Juthia the capital of the empire, one may travel for a week together, without meeting with the least sign of population, through an immense extent of country well watered, the soil of which is excellent, and still bears the marks of former culture. This fine country is now over-run with tigers.

IT was formerly inhabited by men. Besides the natives, it was full of settlements that had been successively formed there by the nations situated to the east of Asia. Their inducement was the immense trade carried on there. All historians attest, that in the beginning of the sixteenth century a great number of ships came into their roads every year. The tyranny which prevailed soon after, successively destroyed the mines, the manufactures, and agriculture. All the foreign merchants, and even those of the nation, were involved in the same ruin. The state fell into confusion, and consequently was weakened. The French, on their arrival, found it thus reduced. General poverty prevailed, and none of the arts were exercised; while the people were under the dominion of a despotic tyrant, who, engrossing all the trade to himself, must of course destroy

destroy it. The few ornaments and articles of luxury that were in use at court, and in the houses of the great, came from Japan. The Siamese held the Japanese in high estimation, and preferred their works to all others.

It was no easy matter to divert them from this attachment, and yet it was the only way of procuring a demand for the produce of French industry. If any thing could effect this change, it was the Christian religion, which the priests of the foreign missions had preached to them, and not without success; but the Jesuits, too much devoted to Faulkon, who began to be odious, abused they favour they enjoyed at Court, and drew upon themselves the hatred of the people. This odium was transferred from them to their religion. They built churches before there were any Christians to frequent them. They founded monasteries, and by these proceedings occasioned the common people and the Talapoys to revolt. The Talapoys are their monks; some of whom lead a solitary life, and others are busy, intriguing men. They preach to the people the doctrines and precepts of Sommona Kodom. That lawgiver of the Siamese was long honoured as a sage, and has since been revered as a god, or as an emanation of the deity, a son of god. A variety of marvellous stories are told of this man: He lived upon one grain of rice a-day. He pulled out one of his eyes to give to a poor man, having nothing else to bestow on him. Another time he gave away his wife. He commanded the stars, the rivers, and the mountains. But he had a brother, who frequently opposed his designs for the good of mankind. God avenged him and crucified that unhappy brother. This fable prejudiced the Siamese against the religion of a crucified God; and they could not worship Jesus Christ, because he died the same death as the brother of Sommona Kodom.

IF the French could not carry their commodities to Siam, thy could at least inspire the people with a taste for them, prepare the way for a great trade with this country, and avail themselves of that which actually offered, to open connections with all the east. The situation of that kingdom between two gulphs, where it extends one hundred and sixty leagues along the sea-coast on the one gulph, and about two hundred on the other, would have opened the navigation of all the seas in that part of the world. The fortrefs of Bancoc built at the mouth of the Menan, which had been put into the hands of the French was an excellent mart for all transactions they might have had with China, the Philippines, or any of the eastern parts of India. Mergui, the principal port of the kingdom, and one of the best in Asia, which had likewise been ceded to them, greatly facilitated their trade with the coast of Coromandel, and chiefly with Bengal. It secured to them an advantageous intercourse with the kingdoms of Pegu, Ava, Arracan, and Lagos, countries still more barbarous than Siam, but where are found the finest rubies and some gold dust. All these countries, as well as Siam, produce the tree which yields that valuable gum, with which the Chinese and Japanese make their varnish; and whoever is in possession of this commodity, may be certain of carrying on a very lucrative trade with China and Japan.

BESIDES the advantage of meeting with good settlements, which were no expence to the company, and might throw into their hands a great part of the trade of the east, they might have brought home from Siam, ivory, logwood like that which is cut in the bay of Campeachy, a great deal of cassia, and all the buffalo and deer-skins that the Dutch formerly fetched from thence. They might have grown pepper there, and, possibly, other spices which were not to be found in the country, as the people did not understand the culture

culture of them, and because the wretched inhabitants of Siam are so indifferent to every thing, that nothing succeeds with them.

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THE French paid no attention to these objects. The factors of the company, the officers, and the Jesuits, were equally ignorant of trade: the whole attention of the latter was taken up in converting the natives, and making themselves masters of them. At last, after having given but a weak assistance to Faulkon at the instant when he was ready to execute his designs, they were involved in his disgrace; and the fortresses of Mergui and Bancoc, defended by French troops, were taken from them by the meanest of all nations.

DURING the short time that the French were settled at Siam, the company endeavoured to establish themselves at Tonquin. They flattered themselves that they might trade with safety and advantage with a nation which had for ages been instructed by the Chinese. Theism prevails among them, which is the religion of Confucius, whose precepts and writings are there held in greater veneration than even in China. But there is not the same agreement as in China in the principles of government, religion, laws, opinion, rites, and ceremonies: and though Tonquin has the same law-giver, it is far from having the same morals. We find there neither that respect for parents, that love for the prince, those reciprocal affections, nor those social virtues, which are met with in China; nor have they the same good order, police, industry, or activity.

THIS nation, which is devoted to excessive indolence, and is voluptuous without taste or delicacy, lives in constant distrust of its sovereigns and of strangers. It is doubtful whether this mistrust proceeds from a natural restlessness of temper, or whether their spirit of sedition be owing to this circumstance, that the Chinese system of morality has enlightened the

the people without improving the government. Whatever be the progress of knowledge, whether it comes from the people to the government, or from that to the people, it is necessary that both should be enlightened at the same time, or else the state will be exposed to fatal revolutions. In Tonquin, there is a continual struggle between the eunuchs who govern, and the people who impatiently bear the yoke. Every thing languishes and tends to ruin, in consequence of these dissensions; and the calamities must increase, till the people have compelled their masters to grow wiser, or the masters have rendered their subjects quite insensible. The Portuguese and the Dutch, who had attempted to form some connections in Tonquin, had been forced to give them up. The French were not more successful. No Europeans have since carried on that trade, except some few merchants of Madras, who have alternately forsaken and resumed it. They divide with the Chinese the exportation of copper and ordinary silks, the only commodities of any value that country affords.

COCHINCHINA lay too near Siam not to draw the attention of the French; and they would probably have fixed there, had they had sagacity enough to foresee what degree of splendour that rising state would one day acquire. The Europeans are indebted to a philosophical traveller for what little they know with certainty of that fine country. The following is the result of his observations:

WHEN the French arrived in those distant regions they learned, that, about half a century before, a prince of Tonquin, as he fled from his sovereign who pursued him as a rebel, had with his soldiers and adherents crossed the river, which serves as a barrier between Tonquin and Cochinchina. The fugitives, who were warlike and civilized men, soon expelled the

the scattered inhabitants, who wandered about without any society or form of government, or any laws but that mutual interest which prompted them not to injure one another. Here they founded an empire upon the basis of agriculture and property. Rice was the food the most easily cultivated, and the most plentiful; upon this, therefore, the new colonists bestowed their first attention. The sea and the rivers attracted a number of inhabitants to their borders, by the supply of excellent fish they afforded. Domestic animals were bred there, some for food, and others for labour. The inhabitants cultivated the trees they were most in want of, such as the cotton for their cloathing. The mountains and forests, which could not possibly be cultivated, afforded wild fowl, metals, gums, perfumes, and wood of an excellent kind. These productions served as so many materials, means, and objects of commerce. One hundred galleys were built, which were constantly employed in defending the coasts of the kingdom.

ALL these several advantages were well bestowed upon a people of a mild and humane disposition, a disposition which they partly owe to their women. Whether it be that this influence they acquire is owing to their beauty, or whether it is the particular effect of their assiduity and of their skill in business; in general, it is certain, that in the first beginning of all societies, the women are sooner civilized than the men. Even their weakness, and their sedentary life, their being more taken up with fewer cares, furnish them sooner with that knowledge and experience, and incline them to those domestic attachments, which are the first promoters and strongest ties of society. This is, perhaps the reason why, in many savage nations, the women are intrusted with the administration of civil government, which is but a higher degree of domestic

nessic œconomy. So long as the state is but as one great family, the women are capable of undertaking the management of it. Then, undoubtedly, the people are happiest, especially in a climate where nature has left but little for man to do.

SUCH is the climate of Cochinchina. The people, though but imperfectly civilized, enjoy that happiness which might excite the envy of more improved societies. They have neither robbers nor beggars. Every one is at liberty to live at his own house, or at his neighbour's. A traveller freely enters a house in any village, sits down to table, eats and drinks without being invited or asked any questions, and then goes away without acknowledging the civility. He is a man, and therefore a friend and relation of the family. If he were a foreigner, he would excite more curiosity, but would be equally welcome.

THESE customs are the relics of the government of the first six kings of Cochinchina, and derived from the original contract entered into between the nation and their leader, before they crossed the river that divides Tonquin from Cochinchina. These men were weary of oppression. They dreaded the like calamity, and therefore took care to guard against the abuse of authority, which is so apt to transgress its due limits, if not kept under some restraint. Their chief, who had set them an example of liberty, and taught them to revolt, promised them that felicity which he himself chose to enjoy; that of a just, mild, and parental government. He cultivated with them the land in which they had all taken refuge. He never demanded any thing of them, except an annual and voluntary contribution, to enable him to defend the nation against the tyrant of Tonquin, who, for a long time, pursued them beyond the river which separated them from him.

THIS primitive contract was religiously observed for upwards of a century, under five or six successors of that brave deliverer : but at last it has been infringed. The reciprocal and solemn engagement between the king and his people is still renewed every year in the face of heaven and earth, in a general assembly of the whole nation, held in an open field, where the oldest man presides, and where the king only assists as a private person. He still honours and protects agriculture, but does not, like his predecessors, set the example of labour to his subjects. When he speaks of them, he still says, *they are my children* ; but they are no longer so. His courtiers have stiled themselves his slaves, and have given him the pompous and sacrilegious title of *king of heaven*. From that moment, men must have appeared to him but as so many insects creeping on the ground. The gold which he has taken out of the mines, has put a stop to agriculture. He has despised the homely roof of his ancestors, and would build a palace. Its circumference has been marked out, and is a league in extent. Thousands of cannon planted round the walls of this palace, make it formidable to the people. A despotic monarch resides there, who in a short time will be secluded from the eyes of the people ; and this concealment, which characterises the majesty of eastern kings, will substitute the tyrant to the father of the nation.

THE discovery of gold has brought on that of taxes ; and the administration of the finances will soon take place of civil legislation and social contract. Contributions are no longer voluntary, but are extorted. Designing men go to the king's palace, and craftily obtain the privilege of plundering the provinces. With gold they at once purchase a right of committing crimes and the privilege of impunity ; they bribe
the

the courtiers, elude the vigilance of the magistrates, and oppress the husbandmen. The traveller already fees, as he passes along, fallow grounds, and whole villages forsaken by their inhabitants. This *king of heaven*, like the gods of Epicurus, carelessly suffers plagues and calamities to vex the land. He is ignorant of the sufferings and distresses of his people, who will soon fall into a state of annihilation, like the savages whose territories they now possess. All nations governed by despotism must inevitably perish in this manner. If Cochinchina relapses into that state of confusion out of which it emerged about a hundred and fifty years ago, it will be wholly disregarded by the navigators who now frequent the ports of that kingdom. The Chinese, who carry on the greatest trade there, get in exchange for their own commodities wood for small work, and timber for building houses and ships.

THEY also export from thence an immense quantity of sugar, the raw at four livres (3s. 6d.) a hundred weight, the white at eight (7s.), and sugar-candy at ten (8s. 9d.): very good silk, fattins, and pitre, the fibres of a tree, not unlike the banana, which they fraudulently mix in their manufactures: black and ordinary tea, which serves for the consumption of common people: such excellent cinnamon, that it sells three or four times dearer than that of Ceylon. There is but a small quantity of this; as it grows only upon one mountain, which is always surrounded with guards. Excellent pepper is another article; and such pure iron, that they work it as it comes out of the mine, without smelting: gold of three and twenty carrats, which is found there in greater plenty than in any other part of the East: eagle-wood, which is more or less esteemed as it is more or less resinous. The pieces that contain

tain most of this rosin are commonly taken from the heart, or from the root of the tree. They are called calunbac, and are always sold for their weight in gold to the Chinese, who account them the highest cordial in nature. They are carefully preserved in pewter-boxes, to keep them from drying. When they are to be administered, they are ground upon a marble, with such liquids as are best suited to the disorder they are intended to remove. To inferior eagle wood, which always sells for a hundred livres (4l. 7s. 6d.) a pound at least, is carried to Persia, Turkey, and Arabia. They use it to perfume their cloaths, and sometimes their apartments, upon very extraordinary occasions, and then they mix it with amber. It is also used for another purpose. A custom prevails amongst these nations, when they are desirous of shewing their visitors great marks of civility, to present them with pipes, then with coffee and sweetmeats. When conversation begins to grow languid, the sherbet is brought in, which is looked upon as a hint to depart. As soon as the stranger rises to go away, they bring in a little pan with eagle-wood, and perfume his beard, sprinkling it with rose-water.

THOUGH the French, who had scarce any thing else to bring but cloth, lead, gunpowder, and brimstone, were obliged to trade with Cochinchina chiefly in money, yet they were under a necessity of pursuing this trade in competition with the Chinese. This inconvenience might have been obviated by the profit that would have been made upon goods sent to Europe, or sold in India; but it is now too late to attempt it. Probity and honesty, the essentials of an active and lasting trade, are forsaking these regions, which were formerly so flourishing, in proportion as the government becomes arbitrary, and conse-

quently unjust. In a short time no greater number of ships will be seen in their harbours than in those of the neighbouring states, where they were scarcely known.

HOWEVER this may be, the French company driven from Siam, and without hopes of settling at the extremities of Asia, began to regret their factory at Surat, where they dared not appear again, since they had left it without paying their debts. They had lost the only market they knew of for their cloths, their lead, and their iron; and they were continually at a loss in the purchase of goods to answer the capricious demands of the mother country, and the wants of the colonies. By fulfilling all their former engagements, they might have recovered the privilege they had forfeited. The Mogul government, which would have wished to see a greater number of ships resorting to Surat, often solicited the French to satisfy these claims; for they preferred them to the English, who had purchased of the court an exemption from all duties. Whether it was for want of honesty, of skill, or of means, certain it is that the company never could remove the reproach they had incurred. They confined their whole attention to the fortifying of Pondicherry, when they were suddenly prevented by a bloody war, which was owing to remote causes.

The loss and recovery of Pondicherry, which became the chief settlement in India.

THE northern Barbarians who had overturned the Roman empire, that was mistress of the world, established a form of government which would not admit of augmenting their conquests, and kept every state within its natural limits. The abolition of the feudal laws, and the alterations consequent upon it, seemed to tend a second time to establish a kind of universal monarchy; but the Austrian power, weakened by the great extent of its possessions and their distance

distance from each other, could not subvert the bulwarks that were raising against it. After a whole century passed in contests, hopes, and disappointments, it was forced to yield to a nation, whose strength, position, and activity, rendered her more formidable to the liberties of Europe. Richelieu and Mazarine began this revolution by their intrigues. Turenne and Condé completed it by their victories. Colbert settled it by the introduction of arts, and of all kinds of industry. If Lewis XIV. who may be said to have been not, perhaps, the greatest monarch of his age, but one who best supported the dignity of the throne, had been more moderate in the exercise of his power, and the sense of his grandeur, it is difficult to determine how far he might have carried his good fortune. His vanity proved detrimental to his ambition. After bending his own subjects to his will, he wanted to exert power over his neighbours. His pride raised him more enemies than his influence and his genius could supply him with allies and resources.

HE was delighted with the flatteries of his panegyrists and courtiers, who promised him universal monarchy; and the pleasure he took in these adulations contributed still more than the extent of his power to inspire a dread of universal conquest and slavery. The distresses and invectives of his protestant subjects, dispersed by a tyrannical fanaticism, completed the hatred he had incurred by his successes, and the abuse he had made of his prosperity.

THE Prince of Orange, a man of a steady, upright disposition, and of a penetrating judgment, endowed with every virtue that is consistent with ambition, became the chief instigator of all these resentments, which he had long fomented by his negotiations and his emissaries. France was attacked by the most formidable

midable confederacy recorded in history, and yet she was constantly triumphant.

SHE was not so successful in Asia as in Europe. The Dutch first endeavoured to prevail upon the natives to attack Pondicherry, which they could never be compelled to restore. The Indian prince, to whom they applied for that purpose, was not to be bribed to agree to so perfidious a proposal: His constant answer was, *The French have bought that place, it would be unjust to turn them out.* What the Raja refused to do, the Dutch did themselves: they besieged the town in 1693, and were obliged to restore it at the peace of Ryswick, in a much better condition than they found it.

MARTIN was again appointed director, and managed the affairs of the company with that wisdom, skill, and integrity, which was expected from him. That able and virtuous merchant invited many new settlers to Pondicherry, and made the place agreeable to them, by the good order he maintained there, and by his moderation and justice. He acquired the favour of the neighbouring princes, whose friendship was of consequence to an infant settlement. He chose or formed good subjects, whom he sent to the markets of Asia, and to the several princes of that empire. He had persuaded the French, that as they were come last to India, that as they found themselves there in a weak condition, and could not expect any assistance from their own country, that they had no other way of succeeding, but by inspiring the natives with a favourable opinion of their character. He made them lay aside that levity, and those contemptuous airs, which so often make their nation insufferable to strangers. They grew modest, gentle, and attentive to business; they learned the art of behaving suitable to the genius of the several nations, and to particular circumstances. Those who did not confine themselves to the

the company's service, frequenting different courts, became acquainted with the places where the finest stuffs were manufactured, the staples where the choicest commodities were to be met with, and, in short, with all the particulars relative to the inland trade of every country.

ALL that Martin had in his power to accomplish, was to lay the foundation of future success to the company, by the good opinion he gave of the French, by the pains he took to train up agents, by the informations he gained, and by the good order he maintained in Pondicherry, which daily acquired new inhabitants; but all this was not sufficient to restore the declining state of the company, subject from its infancy to such disorders as must at length certainly destroy it.

His first scheme was to establish a great empire at Madagascar. A single voyage carried over 1668 persons, who were made to expect a delightful climate and a rapid fortune, and found nothing but famine, discord, and death.

Decline of
the French
company,
and the
cause of it.

So unfortunate a beginning discouraged the adventurers from an undertaking, which they had entered upon merely with a view to follow the example of others, or in compliance with solicitations. The owners of shares had not made good their payments with so much punctuality as is required in commercial affairs. The government, which had engaged to advance without interest a fifth part of the sums the company were to receive, and which as yet was only bound to furnish two millions (87,500*l.*), again drew the same sum out of the public treasury, in hopes of supporting the work it had begun. Some time after its generosity was carried still further, and freely gave what at first was only lent.

THIS encouragement from the ministry could not, however, enable the company to proceed in their designs.

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signs. They were forced to confine them to Surat and Pondicherry ; and to abandon their settlements at Bantam, Rajapore, Tilseri, Mazulipatam, Gombroon, and Siam. No doubt they had too many factories, and some were ill situated ; but the inability they were under of supporting them was the only reason that they were abandoned.

SOON after this, it became necessary to make further advances. In 1682, they gave permission indiscriminately to French subjects and foreigners to trade to the East-Indies for five years on the company's ships, paying the freight that should be agreed upon ; and on condition that the goods brought home should be deposited in the company's warehouses, sold at the same time with theirs, and be subject to a duty of five *per cent*. The public so eagerly came into this proposal, that the directors entertained great hopes from the increase of these small profits, which would be constant without any risk. But the proprietors, less sensible of these moderate advantages, than jealous of the great profits made by the free traders, in two years time obtained a repeal of this regulation, and their charter remained in full force.

To support this monopoly with some decency, a fund was wanting. In 1684, the company obtained from government a call upon all the proprietors, amounting to a fourth part of their property ; and in case any one failed to pay the sum required, his whole share was to be made over to any one who should pay it for him. Whether from perverseness, from particular motives, or from inability, many did not pay, so that their shares lost three fourths of their original value ; and, to the disgrace of the nation, there were men barbarous and unjust enough to enrich themselves with their spoils.

AN expedient so dishonourable enabled them to fit out a few ships for Asia ; but new wants were soon felt. Their cruel situation, which continually grew worse, put them upon demanding of the proprietors in 1697, the restitution of the dividends of ten and twenty per cent. which they had received in 1687 and 1691. So extraordinary a proposal raised a general clamour. The company were obliged to have recourse to the usual method of borrowing. These loans became more burdensome, the more they were multiplied, as the security was more precarious.

As the company was in want both of money and credit, the emptiness of their coffers put it out of their power to afford those advantages and that encouragement to the merchant in India, without which he will neither work, nor set others to work. This inability reduced the French sales to nothing. It is demonstrable, that from 1664 to 1684, that is, in the space of twenty years, the sum total of their produce did not exceed nine millions one hundred thousand livres (398,125l.)

To these had been added other abuses. The conduct of administrators and agents for the company had not been properly directed or carefully looked into. The capital had been broken into, and dividends paid out of the stock, which ought only to have arisen from the profits. The least brilliant and least prosperous of all reigns had exhibited a model for a commercial company. The trade to China, the easiest, the safest, and the most advantageous that is carried on with Asia, had been given up to a particular body of merchants.

THE bloody war of 1689 added to the calamities of the India company, even by the very successes of France. Swarms of privateers, fitted out from the several harbours in the kingdom, annoyed by their vigilance

gillance and bravery the trade of Holland and England. In their numberless prizes were found a prodigious quantity of India goods, which were retailed at a low price. The company, who by this competition were forced to sell under prime cost, endeavoured to find out some expedient to save themselves from this danger, but could think of none that was reconcileable with the interest of the privateers; nor did the minister think proper to sacrifice an useful set of men to a body, which had so long wearied him with their murmurs and complaints.

BESIDES these, the company had many more causes of discontent. The financiers had shewn an open hatred for them, and were continually opposing or confining them. Supported by those vile associates which they always have at court, they endeavoured to put an end to the India trade, under the specious pretence of encouraging the home manufactures. The government was at first afraid of being exposed to reproach, by departing from the principles of Colbert, and repealing the most solemn edicts: but the farmers of the revenue found means to render those privileges useless, which the ministry would not abolish, and the company no longer enjoyed, without being absolutely deprived of them.

HEAVY duties were successively laid upon all India goods. Half a year seldom passed, without some new regulation, sometimes to allow, sometimes to prohibit, the use of these commodities: there was a continued scene of contradictions in a part of administration, that would have required steady and invariable principles. All these variations gave Europe room to think that trade would hardly be established in a kingdom where all depends upon the caprices of a minister, or the interest of those who govern.

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THE conduct of an ignorant and corrupt administration, the levity and impatience of the proprietors, the interested views of the comptrollers of finance, the oppressive spirit of the treasury, joined to other causes, had prepared the ruin of the company. The miseries of the war, carried on for the Spanish succession, hastened their destruction.

EVERY resource was exhausted. The most sanguine saw no prospect of their being able to send out a fleet. Besides, if by unexpected good fortune some few weak vessels should be fitted out, it was to be feared they might be seized in Europe, or in India, by disappointed creditors, who must necessarily be exasperated. These powerful motives determined the company in 1707, to consent that some rich merchants should send their own ships to India, upon condition that they should allow the company fifteen per cent. profit upon the goods they should bring home, and the right of taking such share in those ships as their circumstances should admit of. Soon after this, they were even reduced to make over the whole and exclusive exercise of their privilege to some privateers of St. Malo, still reserving the same concession, which for some years past had in some degree kept them from ruin.

NOTWITHSTANDING this desperate situation, in 1714 they solicited the renewal of their charter, which was nearly expired, and which they had enjoyed for half a century. The ministry, who did not know, or would not perceive, that measures more prudential might be adopted, granted them an indulgence for ten years longer. This new regulation took place but in part, in consequence of some extraordinary events, the causes of which we shall next inquire into.

WHOEVER

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The French company recovers something of its ancient splendour by Law's system; but soon relapses into obscurity.

WHOEVER has been accustomed to trace the progress of empires, has always considered the death of Colbert as the event that put an end to the true prosperity of France. She still appeared with some outward splendour, but her inward decay increased daily. Her finances, administered without order or principle, fell a prey to a multitude of rapacious farmers of the revenue. These people made themselves necessary even by their plunders, and went so far as to impose terms to government. The confusion, usury, and continual alterations in the coin, the reductions of interest, the alienations of the domain and of the taxes, engagements which it was impossible to fulfil, the creation of pensions and places, the privileges and exemptions of all kinds, and a thousand other evils, each more ruinous than the other, were the consequences of so corrupt an administration.

THE loss of credit soon became universal. Bankruptcies were more frequent. Money grew scarce, and trade was at a stand. The consumption was less. The culture of lands was neglected. Artists went over to foreign countries. The common people had neither food nor cloathing. The nobility served in the army without pay, and mortgaged their lands. All orders of men groaned under the weight of taxes, and were in want of the necessaries of life. The royal effects had lost their value. The contracts upon the *hotel de ville* sold but for half their worth, and the bills of sale fell eighty or ninety per cent. under par. Lewis XIV. a little before his death, was in great want of eight millions (350,000l.); and was forced to give bonds for 32,000,000 (1,400,000l.) which was borrowing at four hundred per cent.

IN this confusion were public affairs, when the Duke of Orleans took the reins of government.

Those

Those who were for violent measures, proposed to sacrifice the creditors of the state to the landholders, as the former were in proportion to the latter but as one to six hundred. The regent refused to come into a measure that would have stamped an indelible stain upon his administration. He preferred an inquiry into the public engagements to a total bankruptcy.

NOTWITHSTANDING the reduction of 600,000,000 (26,250,000*l.*) of stock to bearer, to 250,000,000 (10,937,500*l.*) of government bonds, the national debt amounted to 262,138,001 livres (90,218,537*l.* 11*s.*) at twenty-eight livres (1*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.*) the mark, the interest of which at four per cent. amounted to 89,983,453 livres (3,936,776*l.* 1*s.* 4*d.* $\frac{1}{2}$.)

THIS enormous debt, which nearly absorbed the whole of the public revenue, suggested the idea of appointing a bed of justice, to call those to account who had been the authors of the public calamities, and had enriched themselves with the spoils of the nation. This inquiry only served to expose to public view the incapacity of the ministers who had been intrusted with the management of the finances, the craft of the farmers of the revenue who had swallowed them up, and the baseness of the courtiers who had sold their interest to the first bidder. By this experiment, honest minds were confirmed in the abhorrence they always had for such a tribunal. It degrades the dignity of the prince who fails to fulfil his engagements, and exposes to the people the vices of a corrupt administration. It is injurious to the rights of the citizen, who is accountable for his actions to none but the law. It strikes terror into the rich, who are marked out as delinquents, merely because they are rich, be their fortunes well or ill gotten. It gives encouragement to informers, who point out as

fit

fit objects for tyranny such as it may be advantageous to ruin. It is composed of unmerciful leeches, who see guilt wherever they suspect there is money. It spares plunderers, who find means to secrete their wealth in time; and spoils honest men who think themselves secure in their innocence. It sacrifices the interests of the treasury to the whims of a few greedy, profligate, and extravagant favourites.

WHILE France was exhibiting to all Europe the cruel and disgraceful spectacle of these complicated evils, a Scotch empiric arrived at Paris, who for some time had been travelling about, and making a display of his talents, hurried on by his own restless disposition. His fiery genius and peremptory manner were capable of bearing down every argument, and surmounting every difficulty. In 1716 he suggested the idea of a bank, the success of which confounded his opponents, and even exceeded his own expectations. With ninety millions (3,937,500*l.*) that the West India company furnished towards this bank, it gave new life to agriculture, to trade, to arts; in short, to the whole nation. The author was extolled as an accurate, extensive, and elevated genius, who despised fortune, aimed only at glory, and wanted to transmit his name to posterity by great actions. Such was the gratitude of the public, that he was thought to deserve the highest honours. This astonishing prosperity gave him an unlimited authority. He made use of it in 1719 to unite the East and West India companies, as likewise those of Africa and China, into one body. Commercial schemes were the least concern of the new society. They carried their ambition so far as to pretend to pay off all the national debt. The government granted them the sole vending of tobacco, the mint, the receipts, and general

general farms, to enable them to pursue so grand a project. BOOK
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At first, Law's schemes met with universal approbation. Six hundred and twenty-four thousand shares, mostly bought with government bills, and which upon an average did not really cost 500 livres (21l. 17s. 6d.) rose to 10,000 livres (437l. 10s.) payable in bank notes. Such was the infatuation of the public, that not only Frenchmen, but foreigners, and even the most sensible people, sold their stock, their lands, their jewels, to play this extraordinary game. Gold and silver were held in no estimation; and nothing but paper currency was sought after.

This frenzy multiplied paper credit to such an amazing degree, that it circulated to the amount of 6,138,243,590 livres (268,548,157l. 1s. 3d.) in shares of India stock, or in bank notes, though there was actually in the kingdom no more than twelve hundred millions (52,500,000l.) in specie, at sixty livres a mark (2l. 12s. 6d.)

SUCH disproportion might possibly have been supported in a free nation, where it had been brought on by degrees. The citizens, accustomed to consider the nation as a permanent and independent body, trust to its security the more readily, as they are seldom thoroughly acquainted with its powers, and have a good opinion of its equity founded on experience. Upon the strength of this favourable prejudice, credit is often stretched in those states beyond the real resources and securities of the nation. This is not the case in an absolute monarchy, especially such as have often broken their engagements. If in times of public infatuation an implicit confidence is shewn, the effect ceases with the cause. Their insolvency becomes evident. The honesty of the monarch, the mortgage, the stock, every thing appears imaginary.

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The creditor, recovered from his delirium, demanded his money with a degree of impatience proportionable to his uneasiness. The history of the system will corroborate this truth.

IN order to answer the first demands, the government had recourse to very extraordinary expedients. Gold was prohibited in trade; all persons were forbidden to keep by them more than five hundred livres (211. 17s. 6d.) in specie. An edict was published declaring several successive diminutions in the value of the coin. This had the desired effect; people were now not so anxious to draw their money from the bank; on the contrary, in less than a month they brought in specie to the amount of forty-four million six hundred ninety-six thousand one hundred and ninety livres (1,955,458l. 6s. 3d.) in specie, at eighty livres (3l. 10s.) a mark.

As this infatuation could not be lasting, it was judged expedient to lessen the disproportion between paper currency and money, by reducing the bank bills to half their value, and the shares to five ninths. The standard for the coin was fixed at eighty-two livres ten sols (3l. 12s. 2d. $\frac{1}{4}$.) a mark. This scheme, the most rational, perhaps, that could have been devised in the critical situation of affairs, completed the general confusion. The consternation was universal; every one imagined he had lost half his fortune, and hastened to call in the remainder. The bank had no stock, and the stock-brokers found they had only been grasping at shadows. The foreigners, who had realized their paper at first, and carried off one-third of the ready money of the kingdom, were the least losers. The hopes which the government had conceived of paying off the national debt disappeared with Law; and there remained no lasting monument of the system, but an India company, whose shares

shares were fixed by the liquidation of 1723, to the number of fifty-six thousand, but by subsequent events were reduced to fifty thousand two hundred sixty-eight and four-tenths.

UNFORTUNATELY it preserved the privileges of the several companies out of which it had been formed; and this prerogative added neither to its wisdom or power: it confined the negro-trade, and stopped the progress of the sugar colonies. Most of its privileges served only to authorise odious monopolies. The most fertile regions upon earth, when occupied by the company, were neither peopled nor cultivated. The spirit of finance, which restrains pursuits as much as the commercial spirit enlarges them, became the spirit of the company, and has continued ever since. The directors thought only of turning to their own advantage the rights ceded to the company in Asia, Africa, and America. It became a society of contractors, rather than a trading company. Nothing could possibly be said in praise of their administration, had they not been so honest as to pay off the debts accumulated in India for a century past; and taken care to secure Pondicherry against any invasion, by surrounding it with walls. Their trade was but small and precarious till Orry was appointed to superintend the finances of the nation.

THAT upright and disinterested minister sullied his virtues by a harshness of temper which he apologized for in a manner not much to the credit of the nation. One day that a friend was reproaching him for the roughness of his manners, he answered, *How can I behave otherwise? Out of a hundred people I see in a day, fifty take me for a fool, and fifty for a knave.* He had a brother named Fulvy, who was less rigid in his principles, but had more affability, and greater capacity. He intrusted him with the concerns of the company,

Great success of the French in India.

company, which could not but flourish under such a direction.

NOTWITHSTANDING the former prejudices and those which still prevailed ; notwithstanding the abhorrence the public had for any remains of Law's system ; notwithstanding the authority of the Sorbonne, which had decided that the dividend upon the shares came under the denomination of usury ; notwithstanding the blindness of a nation credulous enough not to be shocked at so absurd a decision ; yet still the two brothers found means to convince Cardinal Fleury, that it was proper to support the India company in an effectual manner. They even prevailed upon that minister, who was sometimes too parsimonious, to lavish the king's favours upon this establishment. The care of superintending its trade and increasing its powers was afterwards committed to several persons of known abilities.

DUMAS was sent to Pondicherry. He soon obtained leave of the court of Delhi to coin money ; which privilege was worth four or five hundred thousand livres (about 19,700*l.* on an average) a year. He obtained a cession of the territory of Karical, which entitled him to a considerable share in the trade of Tanjour. Some time after, a hundred thousand Marattas invaded the Decan. They attacked the Nabob of Arcot, who was vanquished and slain. His family and several of his subjects took refuge in Pondicherry. They were received with all the kindness due to allies in distress. Ragogi Bouffola, the general of the victorious army demanded, that they should be delivered up to him ; and further required the payment of 1,200,000 livres (52,500*l.*) by virtue of a tribute, which he pretended the French had formerly submitted to.

DUMAS

DUMAS made answer, That so long as the Moguls had been masters of that country, they had always treated the French with the respect due to one of the most illustrious nations in the world, which took a pride in her turn in protecting her benefactors; that it was contrary to the character of that magnanimous nation to deliver up a number of women and children, and of unfortunate and defenceless men, to see them put to death; that the fugitives then in the town were under the protection of his king, who esteemed it his highest honour to be the protector of the distressed; that every Frenchman in Pondicherry would gladly die in their defence; and that his own life was forfeited, if his sovereign were to know that he had so much as listened to the mention of a tribute. He added, that he was ready to defend the place to the last extremity; and if he was overpowered, he would get on board his ships, and return to Europe: that Rogogi might consider whether he chose to expose his army to utter destruction, when the greatest advantage that could be obtained by it was to take possession of a heap of ruins.

THE Indians had not been accustomed to hear the French talk with so much dignity. This boldness staggered the general of the Marattas; and, after some negotiations skilfully carried on, he determined to keep peace with Pondicherry.

WHILST Dumas was procuring wealth and respect to the company, the government sent la Bourdonnais to the Isle of France.

THE Portuguese, at the time of their first voyages to India, had discovered to the east of Madagascar, between the 19th and 20th degrees of latitude, three islands, to which they gave the names of Mascarenhas, Gerné, and Rodrigue. There they found neither men nor quadrupeds, and attempted no settle-

ment upon either of the islands. The most western of them, which had been called Mascarenhas, served as a refuge about the year 1665 to some Frenchmen, who before were settled at Madagascar. There they found an extent of sixty miles in length, and forty-five in breadth, full of mountains, and but few plains. At first they bred cattle, and afterwards they cultivated European corn, Asiatic and African fruits, and some vegetables fit for that mild climate. The health, plenty, and freedom they enjoyed, induced several sailors belonging to the ships that touched there for refreshments, to come and live amongst them. Industry brought on population. In 1718, they procured some coffee-trees from Arabia, which succeeded tolerably well; though the fruit had lost much of its flavour. This culture and other laborious employments were performed by slaves from the coast of Africa, or from Madagascar. Then the island, which had changed its name from Mascarenhas to the isle of Bourbon, became an important object to the company. In 1763, the population amounted to 4627 white people, and 15149 blacks; the cattle consisted of 8702 beeves, 4084 sheep, 7405 goats, 7619 hogs. Upon an extent of 125,909 acres of cultivated land, they gathered as much cassava as would feed their slaves, 1135000 pounds weight of corn, 844100 pounds of rice, 2879100 pound of maize, and 2535100 pounds of coffee, which the company bought up at six sols (about 3d.) a pound.

UNFORTUNATELY this valuable possession has no harbour. This inconvenience determined the French to attempt a settlement on the island of Cerné, where the Portuguese had, as usual, left some quadrupeds and fowls for the benefit of such of their ships as should chance to touch there. The Dutch, who afterwards took possession of it, forsook it from an apprehension

prehesion of multiplying their settlements too much. The island was uninhabited when the French landed there in 1720, and changed its name from Mauritius to the isle of France, which it still bears.

THE first people that were sent thither, came over from Bourbon, and there they were forgotten for fifteen years. They only formed as it were a corps de garde, with orders to hang out a French flag, to inform all nations that the island had a master. The company, long undetermined, decided at last for the keeping it, and in 1735 la Bourdonnais was commissioned to improve it.

THIS man, who has since been so famous, was born at St. Malo, and had been at sea from the age of ten years; all his voyages had been prosperous, and in every one he had signalized himself by some extraordinary action. He had reconciled the Arabs and the Portuguese, who were preparing to massacre one another in the road of Mocha: and had distinguished himself in the war at Mahé. He was the first Frenchman who ever thought of sending armed vessels into the Indian seas. He was known to be equally skilful in the art of ship-building, as in that of navigating and defending a ship. His schemes bore the mark of genius, nor were his views contracted by the close attention he paid to all the minute particulars of whatever scheme he undertook. Difficulties did but quicken his activity, and display his talent for disposing the men under his command to the best advantage. Nothing was ever laid to his charge but an immoderate passion for riches; and it must be confessed he was not over-scrupulous as to the means of acquiring them.

HE was no sooner arrived at the Isle of France, than he made it his business to acquire every information he could concerning it. He found it to be

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31890 toises in its greatest diameter, 22124 in its greatest breadth, and 432680 acres in surface. The greatest part of this ground was covered with forests almost impenetrable, and with mountains not exceeding 400 toises in height. Most of them were full of reservoirs of water, which poured down in streams upon a dark grey earth, full of perforations, and for the most part stony.

THE sea coast was what la Bourdonnais chiefly attended to; and his principal observations related to the two harbours he found there. He thought the harbour on the south-east side of little consequence, on account of the regular and high winds, which make it impossible, or at least very difficult, to sail out of it at any season of the year. That on the north-west he found far preferable, though the ships must get to it through a narrow channel between two flats, and then be towed in, and though it will scarcely admit above thirty five or forty ships.

As soon as la Bourdonnais had procured these necessary informations, he endeavoured to instil a spirit of emulation into the first colonists on the island, who were entirely discouraged at the neglect with which they had been treated, and attempted to reduce to some subordination the vagrants lately arrived from the mother country. He made them cultivate rice and wheat, for the good of the Europeans, and cassava, which he had brought from Brazil, for the slaves. They were to be furnished from Madagascar with meat for the daily consumption of the richer inhabitants and of sea-faring men, till the cattle they had procured from thence should multiply so considerably, as to prevent the necessity of importing any more. A post which he had established on the little island of Rodrigue, abundantly supplied the poor with turtle. Here ships going to India soon found
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all the refreshments and conveniencies they wanted after a tedious passage. Three ships were fitted out, one of which carried 500 tons burden. If the founder had not the satisfaction of bringing the colony to the utmost degree of prosperity it was capable of, at least he had the credit of having discovered what degree of importance it might acquire in able hands.

THESE improvements, however, though they seemed to be owing to enchantment, did not meet with the approbation of those who were principally concerned in them, and la Bourdonnais was compelled to justify himself. One of the directors was asking him one day how it happened that he had conducted the affairs of the company so ill, while he had taken so much care of his own. *Because,* said he, *I have managed mine according to my own judgment, and those of the company according to your directions.*

GREAT men have been always more useful to the public, than large collective bodies. Nations and societies are but the instruments of men of genius; these have been the true founders of states and colonies. Spain, Portugal, Holland, and England, owe their foreign conquests and settlements to able warriors, experienced seamen, and legislators of superior talents. France especially is more indebted to some fortunate individuals for the glory she has acquired, than to the form of her government. One of these superior men had just established the power of France over two important islands in Africa; another still more extraordinary, whose name was Dupleix, added splendour to the French name in Asia.

HE was first sent to the banks of the Ganges, where he superintended the colony of Chandernagore. That settlement, though formed in a part of the globe the best adapted for great commercial undertakings, had been but in a languid state, till he took

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took the management of it. The company was not able to send any great stock; and the agents, who went over there without any of their own, had not been able to avail themselves of the liberty that was allowed them of advancing their own private affairs. The activity of the new governor, who brought an ample fortune, the reward of ten years successful labours, soon spread throughout the colony. In a country abounding with money they soon found credit, when once they shewed themselves deserving of it. In a short time, Chandernagore excited the admiration of its neighbours, and the envy of its rivals. Dupleix, who had engaged the rest of the French in his vast speculations, opened fresh sources of commerce all over the Mogul's Dominions, and as far as Thibet. On his arrival he had not found a single sloop, and he fitted out fifteen armed vessels at once. These ships carried on trade in different places in India. Some he sent to the Red Sea, to the Gulph of Persia, to Surat, to Goa, to the Maldives, and Manilla Islands, and to all the seas where there was a possibility of trading to advantage.

DUPLEIX had for twelve years supported the honour of the French name on the Ganges, and increased the revenues of the public as well as the private fortunes of individuals, when he was called to Pondicherry, to take upon him the general superintendency of all the company's affairs in India. They were then in a more flourishing condition than they had ever yet been, or have ever been since; for that year the returns amounted to twenty-four millions (1,050,000*l*.) Had they continued to act prudently, had they confided more in two such men as Dupleix and la Bourdonnais, they would probably have acquired such power as would not have been easily destroyed,

LA BOURDONNAIS saw an approaching rupture with England; and proposed a scheme which would have secured to the French the sovereignty of the seas in Asia, during the whole course of the war. He was convinced, that which ever nation should first take up arms in India, would have a manifest advantage over the other. He therefore desired to have a squadron, with which he should sail to the Isle of France, and there wait till hostilities began. From this place he was to go and cruize in the straits of Sunda, where most of the ships pass that are going to, or coming from China. There he would have intercepted all the English ships, and saved those of the French. He would have even taken the small squadron which England sent into those very latitudes; and, having thus made himself master of the Indian seas, would have ruined all the English settlements in those parts.

THE ministry approved of this plan, and granted him five men of war, with which he set sail.

HE had scarcely set sail, when the directors, equally offended at their being kept in the dark as to the destination of the squadron, and at the expences it had occasioned them, and jealous of the advantage this would give to a man who, in their opinion, was already too independent, exclaimed against this armament as they had done before, and declared it to be useless. They were, or pretended to be, so fully convinced of the neutrality that would be observed in India between the two companies, that they persuaded the minister into that opinion, when la Bourdonnais was no longer present to animate him, and guide his inexperience.

THE court of Versailles was not aware that a power, supported chiefly by trade, would not easily be induced to leave them in quiet possession of the Indian ocean; and that, if she either made or listen-

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ed to any proposals of neutrality, it must be only to gain time. It was not aware that, even supposing such an agreement was made *bona fide* on both sides, a thousand unforeseen events might interrupt it. It was not aware, that the object proposed could never be fully answered, because the sea-forces of both nations, not being bound by any private agreement made between two companies, would attack their ships in the European seas. It was not aware, that in the colonies themselves they would make preparations to guard against a surprize; that these precautions would create a mistrust on both sides; and that mistrust would bring on an open rupture. All these particulars were not perceived by the court, and the squadron was recalled. Hostilities began; and the loss of almost every French ship going to India, shewed too late which of the two was the most judicious system of politics.

LA BOURDONNAIS was as deeply affected for the errors that had occasioned the misfortunes of the nation, as if he had been guilty of them himself, and applied wholly to remedy them. Without magazines, without provisions, without money, he found means by his attention and perseverance to form a squadron, composed of a sixty-gun ship, and five merchantmen, which he turned into men of war. He ventured to attack the English squadron; he beat them, pursued and forced them to quit the coast of Coromandel; he then besieged and took Madrafs, the first of the English settlements. The victor was preparing for fresh expeditions, which were certain and easy; but he met with the most violent opposition, which not only occasioned the loss of the sum of 9,057,000 livres (396,243l. 15s.) he had stipulated for as the ransom of the city, but also deprived him of the success which must necessarily have followed his undertakings.

THE

THE company was then governed by two of the king's commissaries, who were irreconcilable enemies to each other. The directors and the inferior officers had taken part in the quarrel, according as their inclination or their interest led them. The two factions were extremely incensed against each other. That which had caused la Bourdonnais's squadron to be taken from him, was enraged to see that he had found resources in himself, to ward off every blow that was aimed at him. There is good reason to believe, that this faction pursued him to India, and instilled the poison of jealousy into the heart of Dupleix. Two men formed to esteem and love each other, to adorn the French name, and to descend together to posterity, became the vile tools of an animosity in which they were not the least interested. Dupleix opposed la Bourdonnais, and made him lose much time. The latter, after having staid too long on the coast of Coromandel, waiting for the succours which had been unnecessarily delayed, saw his squadron destroyed by a storm. The crews were disposed to mutiny. So many misfortunes, brought on by the intrigues of Dupleix, determined la Bourdonnais to return to Europe, where a horrid dungeon was the reward of all his glorious services, and the end of all the hopes which the nation had built upon his great talents. The English, delivered from that formidable enemy in India, and considerably reinforced, found themselves in a condition to attack the French in their turn, and accordingly laid siege to Pondicherry.

DUPLEIX then made amends for past errors. He defended the town with great skill and bravery; and after the trenches had been opened six weeks, the English were forced to raise the siege. The news of the peace arrived soon after, and all hostilities ceased between the companies of both nations.

THE

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View of the
French to
aggrandize
themselves.
Account of
Indostan.

THE taking of Madrafs, la Bourdonnais's engagement at sea, and the raising of the siege of Pondicherry, gave the Indian nations a high opinion of the French; and they were respected in those parts as the first and greatest of the European powers.

DUPLEIX endeavoured to avail himself of this disposition, and took care to procure lasting and important advantages for his nation. In order to judge rightly of his projects, we must lay before the reader a description of the state of Indostan at that time.

If we may credit uncertain tradition, that fine rich country tempted the first conquerors of the world. But whether Bacchus, Hercules, Sesostris, or Darius, did or did not carry their arms through that large portion of the globe, certain it is, that it proved an inexhaustible fund of fictions and wonders to the ancient Greeks. That people, ever credulous, because they were carried away by their imagination, were so enchanted with these marvellous stories, that they still gave credit to them, even in the more enlightened ages of the republic.

If we consider this matter according to the principles of reason and truth, we shall find that a pure air, wholesome food, and great frugality, had early multiplied men to a prodigious degree in Indostan. They were acquainted with laws, civil government and arts; whilst the rest of the earth was desert and savage. Wise and beneficial institutions preserved these people from corruption, and their only care was to enjoy the gifts of the earth and of the climate. If from time to time their morals were tainted in some of these states, the empire was immediately subverted; and when Alexander entered these regions, he found very few kings, and many free cities.

A COUNTRY divided into numberless little states, some of which were popular, and others enslaved,

could

could not make a very formidable resistance against the hero of Macedonia. His progress was rapid, and he would have subdued the whole country, had not death overtaken him in the midst of his triumphs.

By following this conqueror in his expeditions, the Indian Sandrocotus had learned the art of war. This obscure man, who had nothing to recommend him but his talents, collected a numerous army and drove the Macedonians out of the provinces they had invaded. The deliverer of his country then made himself master of it, and united all Indostan under his dominion. How long he reigned, or what was the duration of the empire he had founded, is not known.

At the beginning of the eighth century, the Arabs over-ran India, as they did many other parts of the world. They subjected some few islands to their dominion; but, content with trading peaceably on the continent, they made but few settlements on it.

THREE centuries after this, some barbarians of their religion, who came out from Khorassan headed by Mahmoud, attacked India on the north side, and extended their depredations as far as Guzarat. They carried off immense spoils from those wealthy provinces, and buried them under ground in their wretched and barren deserts.

THESE calamities were not yet forgotten, when Gingis-Khan, who with his Tartars had subdued the greatest part of Asia, brought his victorious army to the western borders of India. This was about the year 1200. It is not known what part this conqueror and his descendents took in the affairs of Indostan. Probably, they did not concern themselves much about them; for it appears, that soon after the Patans reigned over this fine country.

THESE are said to have been Arabian merchants settled on the coasts of Indostan, who, taking advantage

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tage of the weakness of the several kings and nations who had admitted them, easily seized upon many provinces, and founded a vast empire, of which Delhi was the capital. Under their dominion India was happy, because men educated to trade were not influenced by that spirit of devastation and rapine which commonly attends invaders.

THE Indians had scarce had time to accustom themselves to a foreign yoke, when they were once more forced to change masters. Tamerlane, who came from great Tartary, and was already famous for his cruelties and his victories, advanced to the north side of Indostan, at the end of the fourteenth century, with a well-disciplined and triumphant army, inured to all the hardships of war. He secured the northern provinces himself, and abandoned the plunder of the southern ones to his lieutenants. He seemed determined to subdue all India, when on a sudden he turned his arms against Bajazet, overcame and dethroned that prince, and by the union of all his conquests found himself master of the immense space that extends from the delicious coast of Smyrna to the delightful borders of the Ganges. After his death, violent contests arose, and his posterity were deprived of his rich spoils. Babar, the sixth descendent of one of his children, alone survived to preserve his name.

THAT young prince, brought up in sloth and luxury, reigned in Samarcand, where his ancestor had ended his days. The Usbeck Tartars dethroned him, and constrained him to take refuge in the Cabulistan. Ranguildas, the governor of that province, received him kindly, and supplied him with troops.

THIS wise man addressed him in the following manner: "It is not towards the north, where vengeance would naturally call thee, that thy steps must be directed. Soldiers enervated by the pleasures

“ fures of India, could not without rashness attack
“ warriors famous for their courage and their victo-
“ ries. Heaven has conducted thee to the banks of
“ the Indus, in order to fix upon thy brow one of the
“ richest diadems in the universe. Turn thy views
“ towards Indoftan. That empire, torn in pieces by
“ the incessant wars of the Indians and Patans, calls
“ for a master. It is in those delightful regions that
“ thou must establish a new monarchy, and raise thy
“ glory equal to that of the formidable Tamerlane.”

THIS judicious advice made a strong impression on the mind of Babar. A plan of usurpation was immediately traced out, and pursued with activity and skill. Success attended the execution. The northern provinces, not excepting Delhi, submitted after some resistance; and thus a fugitive monarch had the honour of laying the foundation of the power of the Mogul Tartars, which subsists to this day.

THE preservation of this conquest required a form of government. That which Babar found established in India, was a kind of despotism, merely relative to civil matters, tempered by customs, forms, and opinion; in a word, adapted to that mildness which these nations derive from the influence of the climate, and from the more powerful influence of religious tenets. To this peaceable constitution Babar substituted a severe and military despotism, such as might be expected from a victorious and barbarous nation.

RANGUILDAS was long witness to the power of the new sovereign, and exulted in the success of his own councils. The recollection of the steps he had taken to place his master's son upon the throne, filled him with a conscious and real satisfaction.

ONE day, as he was praying in the temple, he heard a Banian, who stood by him, cry out, “ O God!
“ thou seest the sufferings of my brethren. We are
“ a prey

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“ a prey to a young man who considers us as his property, which he may squander and consume as he pleases. Among the many children who call upon thee from these vast regions, one oppresses all the rest: avenge us of the tyrant; avenge us of the traitors who have placed him on the throne without examining whether he was a just man.”

RANGUILDAS, astonished, drew near to the Banian, and said, “ O thou, who curstest my old age, hear me. If I am guilty, my conscience has misled me. When I restored the inheritance to the son of my sovereign, when I exposed my life and fortune to establish his authority, God is my witness, that I thought I was acting in conformity to his wise decrees: and, at the very instant when I heard thy prayer, I was still thanking heaven for granting me, in my latter days, those two greatest of blessings rest and glory.”

“ GLORY! cries the Banian. Learn, Ranguildas, that glory belongs only to virtue, and not to actions which are only splendid, without being useful to mankind. Alas! what advantages did you procure to Indostan when you crowned the son of an usurper? had you previously considered whether he was capable of doing good, and whether he would have the will and resolution to be just? You say, you have restored to him the inheritance of his fathers, as if men could be bequeathed and possessed like lands and cattle. Pretend not to glory, O Ranguildas! or, if you look for gratitude, go and seek it in the heart of Babar; he owes it you. You purchased it at a great price, the happiness of a whole nation.”

BABAR, however, whilst he was bringing his subjects under the yoke of despotism, took care to confine it within certain bounds, and to draw up his institutions

stitutes with so much force, that his successors, though absolute, could not possibly be unjust. The prince was to be the judge of the people, and the arbiter of the state; but his tribunal and his council were to be held in the public square. Injustice and tyranny love darkness, in order to conceal themselves from their intended victor: but when the monarch's actions are to be submitted to the inspection of his subjects, it is a sign he intends nothing but their good. Openly to insult a number of men assembled, is such an outrage as even a tyrant would blush at.

THE principal support of his authority was a body of four thousand men, who stiled themselves the first slaves of the prince. Out of this body were chosen the Omrahs, those persons who composed the emperor's councils, and on whom he bestowed lands, distinguished by great privileges. This sort of possessions always reverted to the crown. It was on this condition that all great offices were given. So true it is, that despotism enriches its slaves only to plunder them.

GREAT interest, however, was made for the post of Omrah. Whoever aspired to the government of a province, made this the object of his ambition. To prevent any projects the governors might form for their own aggrandizement or independence, they always had overseers placed about them, who were not under their controul, and who were commissioned to inspect the use they made of the military force they were intrusted with, to keep the conquered Indians in awe. The fortified towns were frequently in the hands of officers, who were accountable only to the Court. That suspicious court often sent for the governor, and either continued him or removed him, as it happened to suit her fluctuating policy. These changes were grown so common, that a new governor

nor coming out of Delhi, remained upon his elephant with his face turned towards the city, *waiting*, as he said, *to see his successor come out.*

THE form of government, however, was not the same throughout the empire. The Moguls had left several Indian princes in possession of their sovereignties, and even with a power of transmitting them to their descendents. They governed according to the laws of the country, though accountable to a nabob appointed by the court. They were only obliged to pay tribute, and to conform to the conditions stipulated with their ancestors at the time of the conquest.

THE conquering nation could not have committed any considerable ravages since it does not yet constitute more than a tenth part of the population of India. There are a hundred millions of Indians to ten millions of Tartars. The two nations have never intermixed. None but Indians are farmers and artificers. They alone live in the country, and carry on the manufactures. The Mohammedans are to be found in the capital, at court, in great cities, in camps and armies.

It appears, that at that period when the Moguls entered Indostan, they found no private property. All the lands belonged to the Indian princes; and it may easily be imagined that savage conquerors, sunk in ignorance and avarice, did not rectify this abuse, which is the utmost stretch of arbitrary power. That portion of the lands of the empire which the new sovereigns call their own, was divided into large governments, which were called subahships. The subahs, who were intrusted with the civil and military government, were also appointed to receive the revenues. This they committed to the care of the nabobs, whom they established throughout their subahships; and these again trusted this business to private farmers, whose immediate business it was to cultivate the lands.

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AT the beginning of their year, which is in June, the nabob's officers agreed with the farmers for the price of their farm. A kind of deed was drawn up, called jamabandi, which was deposited in the chancery of the province; after which, the farmers went, each in his own district, to look for husbandmen, and advanced them considerable sums to enable them to sow the ground. After harvest, the farmers remitted the produce of their grounds to the nabobs officers. The nabob delivered it to the subah, and the subah paid it into the emperor's treasury. The agreements were commonly for half the produce of the land; the other half went to pay the charges of culture to enrich the farmers, and to subsist those whom they employed in tilling the land. In this system were comprised not only corn, which is the principal crop, but all other productions of the earth. Betel, salt, tobacco, were all farmed in the same manner.

THERE were also some custom-houses, and some duties upon the public markets; but no poll-tax, or any tax upon industry. These arbitrary rulers had not thought of requiring any thing from men who had nothing left them. The weaver, sitting at his loom, worked without solicitude, and freely disposed of the fruit of his labour.

THIS liberty extended to every kind of moveables. They were truly the property of private persons, who were not accountable to any person for them. They could dispose of them in their life-time; and, after their death, they devolved to their offspring. The houses of artificers, the town-houses with the little gardens belonging to them, were likewise accounted private property. They were hereditary, and might be sold.

IN the latter case, the buyer and seller appeared before the Cothoal. The conditions of the bargain

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were drawn up in writing ; and the Cothoal affixed his seal to the deed, to make it valid.

THE same formality was observed with regard to the purchase of slaves ; that is, of those unfortunate men, who, under the pressure of poverty, chose rather to be in bondage to one man who allowed them a subsistence, than to live under that general slavery in which they had no means of procuring the necessaries of life. They then sold themselves for a sum of money ; and this was transacted in presence of the Cothoal, that the master's property might not be contested.

THE Cothoal was a kind of notary public. There was one in every district of a certain size. It was before him that the few deeds were transacted, which the nature of such a government would admit of. Another officer, called Jemidar, decided all differences that arose between man and man ; and his decisions were almost always definitive, unless the cause was a very important one, or unless the aggrieved party was rich enough to pay for having it reversed at the nabob's court. The Jemidar was likewise intrusted with the police. He had a power of inflicting slight punishments ; but all capital offences were reserved for the judgment of the nabob, as he alone had a right to pronounce a sentence of death.

SUCH a government, which was no better than a despotism gradually descending from the throne down to the meanest officer, could have no other spring than a coercive power constantly exerted. Accordingly as soon as the rainy season was over, the monarch quitted his capital, and resided in his camp. The nabobs, the rajas, and the principal officers, were summoned to attend him ; and in this manner he proceeded through all the provinces successively, in military parade, which, however, did not preclude political artifices.

rice. One great man was often employed to oppress another. The most odious refinement of despotism is that of dividing its slaves. These divisions were fomented by informers, publicly kept by the prince, who were continually spreading alarm and terror. These informers were always chosen among persons of the first rank. Corruption is then at its height, when power can confer nobility on what is mean.

EVERY year, the great Mogul set out on his progress, more as a conqueror, than as a sovereign. He went to administer justice in the provinces, as if he was going to plunder them; and maintained his authority by a parade of military force, which makes arbitrary government a continual state-war. This manner of governing, though with legal forms is very dangerous for the monarch. So long as the people feel their wrongs merely through the channel of those who are invested with his authority, they only murmur, upon the supposition that the sovereign is ignorant of them, and would not suffer any injustice if he knew it: but when the sovereign gives it a sanction by his presence and by his own decisions, then all confidence is at an end; the deception vanishes: he was a God; now he is an idiot, or a wicked man.

THE Mogul emperors, however, have long enjoyed the superstitious idea the nation had conceived of their sacred character. That outward pomp which captivates the people more than justice, because men are more struck with what dazzles their eyes, than with what is beneficial to them; the richness and splendour of the prince's court; the grandeur that surrounded him in his travels; all this kept up in the minds of the people those prejudices of servile ignorance, which trembles before the idol it has raised. The various accounts that have been transmitted to us of the luxury of the most brilliant courts in the

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world, are not to be compared to the ostentatious pomp of the Great Mogul when he appears in public. The elephants, formerly so dreadful in war, but which are become useless in an army since the introduction of gunpowder; these immense animals that are unknown in our climates, give an Asiatic monarch an air of grandeur, of which we have no conception. The people fall prostrate before their majestic sovereign, who sits exalted upon a throne of gold, glittering with precious stones, mounted on the haughty animal, who proceeds slowly, proud to present the master of a great empire to the respect of so many slaves. Thus, by dazzling the eyes of men, or inspiring them with terror, the Moguls preserved and even enlarged their conquests. Aurengzebe completed them, by making himself master of the whole peninsula. All Indostan, excepting a small portion of it along the coast of Malabar, submitted to that superstitious and barbarous tyrant, who had imbrued his hands in the blood of his father, his brothers, and his nephews.

THIS infamous despot made the Mogul power an object of detestation, but he supported it as long as he lived. At his death it was irrecoverably reduced. The uncertainty as to the right of succession was the first cause of the disturbances that arose after his demise, at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Only one law was generally acknowledged; that which enacted, that the sceptre should never go out of the family of Tamerlane; but every emperor was at liberty to chuse his successor, without being obliged to regard the degree of consanguinity. This indefinite right proved a source of discord. Young princes, whose birth entitled them to expect the crown, and who frequently were at the head of a province and an army supported their claim sword-in-hand, and paid little

little regard to the will of a monarch who was no more. This happened at the death of Aurengzebe. His rich spoils were stained with blood. In these convulsions of the state, the springs that restrained an army of twelve hundred thousand men were relaxed. Every nabob aimed at being independent, increasing the contributions raised upon the people, and lessening the tributes sent into the emperor's treasury. No longer was any thing regulated by law, all was carried on by caprice, or thrown into confusion by violent measures.

THE education of the young princes promised no remedy for all these evils. Left to the care of women till the age of seven years, tutored afterwards in some religious principles, they went and spent in the soft indulgences of a seraglio those years of youth and activity which ought to be employed in forming the man, and instructing him in the knowledge of life. Care was taken to enervate them, that they might not become dangerous. Conspiracies of children against their fathers were frequent; to prevent these, therefore, the children were deprived of every virtue, lest they should be capable of a crime. Hence that shocking thought of an oriental poet, that *fathers, whilst their sons are living, are fondest of their grandsons, because they love in them the enemies of their enemies.*

THE Moguls retained nothing of those hardy manners they had brought from their mountains. Those among them who were advanced to high offices, or had acquired large fortunes, changed their habitations according to the seasons. In these retirements, which were some of them more delightful than others, they lived in houses built only of clay or earth, but the inside of which presented every Asiatic luxury, together with all the pomp of the most corrupted courts. Wherever men cannot raise a lasting fortune, nor transmit

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transmit it to their posterity, they are desirous of crowding all their enjoyments in the only moment they can call their own. Every pleasure, and even life itself, is exhausted in the midst of perfumes and women.

THE Mogul empire was in this state of weakness when it was attacked, in 1738, by the famous Thamas Kouli-Kan. The innumerable armies of India were dispersed without resistance by a hundred thousand Persians; as those very Persians had formerly fled before thirty thousand Greeks trained by Alexander. Thamas entered victorious into Delhi, received the homage of the weak Mahomed; and finding the monarch still more stupid than his subjects, he suffered him to live and to reign, united to Persia all the provinces that suited him, and returned loaded with an immense booty, the spoils of Indostan.

MAHOMED, despised by his conqueror, was still more so by his subjects. The great men would not serve under a vassal of the king of Persia. The nabobships became independent, paying only a small tribute. In vain did the emperor declare that the nabobs should still be removeable; each of them strove with all his power to make his dignity hereditary, and the sword decided every quarrel. The subjects were constantly at war with their master, and were not considered as rebels. Whoever could afford to pay a body of troops, pretended to sovereignty. The only formality observed, was to counterfeit the emperor's sign manual in a *firman*, or warrant of investiture. It was brought to the usurper, who received it on his knees. This farce was necessary to impose upon the people, who had still respect enough remaining for the family of Tamerlane, to choose that all authority should, at least, appear to proceed from it.

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Thus did discord, ambition, and anarchy, oppress this fine region of Indostan. Crimes could the more easily be concealed, as it was the custom of the great never to write but in ambiguous terms, and to employ none but obscure agents, whom they disowned when they found it necessary. Assassination and poisoning became common crimes, which were buried in the dark recesses of those impenetrable palaces, full of attendants, ever ready to perpetrate the blackest acts on the least signal from their master.

THE foreign troops that were called-in by the contending parties, completed the miseries of this unhappy country. They carried off all the riches of the land, or obliged the owners to bury them under ground; so that the treasures amassed for so many ages gradually disappeared. A general dejection ensued. The grounds lay fallow, and the manufactures stood still. The people would no longer work for foreign plunderers, or domestic oppressors. Want and famine were soon felt. These calamities, which for ten years had infested the provinces of the empire, began to visit the coast of Coromandel. The wise Nizamul Muluck, subah of the Decan, was now no more. His prudence and talents had kept that part of India which he commanded in a flourishing state. The European merchants were apprehensive that their trade might fail when it had lost that support. They saw no resource against that danger, but to have a territory of their own, large enough to contain a number of manufactures sufficient to make up their lading.

DUPLEIX was the first who considered this as a practicable scheme. The war had brought many troops to Pondicherry, with which he hoped by rapid conquests to procure greater advantages than the rival nations had obtained by a steady conduct, and mature deliberation.

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HE had long studied the character of the Moguls, their intrigues, their political interests. He had acquired such knowledge of these matters, as might have been surprizing even in a man brought up at the court of Delhi. These informations deeply combined, had convinced him that it would be in his power to attain a principal influence in the affairs of Indostan; possibly, to manage them as he pleased. His spirit, which prompted him to attempt more than he was able to perform, gave additional strength to his reflections. Nothing terrified him in the great part he proposed to act at the distance of six thousand leagues from his native country. In vain did his friends represent to him the dangers attending such an undertaking; he considered nothing but the glorious advantage of securing to France a new dominion in the heart of Asia; to enable her, by the revenues annexed to it, to defray the charges of trade and the expences of sovereignty; and even to free her from the tribute which our luxury pays to the industry of the Indians, by procuring rich and numerous cargoes, which should not be bought with any exports of money, but from the overflowings of the new revenues. Full of this great project, Dupleix eagerly seized the first opportunity that offered to put it in execution, and soon took upon him to dispose of the subahship of the Decan, and the nabobship of the Carnatic, in favour of two men who were ready to give up any thing he should require.

THE subahship of the Decan is a vice-royalty, made up of several provinces which were formerly so many independent states. It extends from Cape Comorin to the Ganges. The subah has the superintendance of all the Indian princes and all the Mogul governors within his jurisdiction; and in his hands

hands are deposited the contributions that are destined to fill the public treasure. He can compel his inferior officers to attend him in all military expeditions he may think proper to make into the countries under his dominion; but he is not allowed to march them into a foreign territory, without an express order from the emperor.

THE subahship of the Decan becoming vacant in 1748, Dupleix, after a series of events and revolutions, in which the corruption of the Moguls, the weakness of the Indians, and the boldness of the French, were equally conspicuous, disposed of it towards the beginning of the year 1751, in favour of Salabat-jing, a son of the late viceroy.

THIS success secured great advantages to the French settlements along the coast of Coromandel; but Pondicherry was a place of such importance, that it was thought to deserve a particular attention. This town, which is situated on the Carnatic, has such constant and immediate connections with the nabob of that rich district, that it was thought advisable to procure the government of the province for a man whose affection and submission might be depended upon. The choice fell upon Chunda-saeb, a relation of the late nabob, well known for his intrigues, his misfortunes, his warlike exploits, and his steadiness of temper.

IN return for their services, the French made him give up an immense territory. The principal of their acquisitions was the island of Seringham, formed by the two branches of the Caveri. This long and fertile island derives its name and its consequence from a Pagoda, which is fortified, as most great buildings that are devoted to public worship. The temple is surrounded with seven square inclosures, at the distance of three hundred and fifty feet from each other, and

and formed by pretty high walls, which are proportionably thick. The altar stands in the center. A single monument of this kind, with its fortifications and the mysteries and riches it contains, is more likely to enforce and perpetuate a religion, than a multiplicity of temples and priests dispersed in different towns, with their sacrifices, ceremonies, prayers, and discourses, which, by their number, their frequent repetition, and their being performed in public, are apt to tire the people: they are also exposed to the contempt of enlightened reason, to dangerous profanations, or to the slight and neglect of the people; a circumstance which the priests dread more than sacrilege itself. The priests of India, as wise as those of Egypt, suffer no stranger to penetrate into the Pagoda of Seringham. Amidst the fables in which the history of this temple is involved, probably some acute philosopher might, if he was admitted into it, trace from the emblems, the form and construction of the edifice, and the superstitious practices, and traditions peculiar to that sacred inclosure, many sources of instruction, and an insight into the history of the most remote ages. Pilgrims resort thither from all parts of Indostan, to obtain absolution of their sins, and always bring an offering proportionable to their circumstances. These gifts were still so considerable at the beginning of the present century, as to maintain forty thousand men in a life of sloth and idleness. The Bramins of this temple, though under the restraints of subordination, were seldom known to quit their retirement for the more busy scenes of intrigue and politics.

INDEPENDENT of other advantages which the French enjoyed by the acquisition of Seringham, the situation gave them great influence over the neighbouring countries, and an absolute command over
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the kingdom of Tanjour, as they could at any time stop the waters that were wanted for the culture of their rice.

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THE territories of Karical and Pondicherry got an accession of ten leagues each, with fourscore villages. If these acquisitions were not so considerable as that of Seringham in point of political influence, they were much more so with regard to trade.

BUT this was a trifling acquisition compared to the territory that was gained to the north, which comprehended the Condavir, Masulipatam, the island of Divi, and the four provinces of Mustafanagur, Elur, Rajamandry, and Chicakol. Such important concessions made the French masters of the coast for the space of six hundred miles, and procured them the best linen in Indostan. It is true, they were to enjoy the four provinces no longer than they should furnish the subah with a stipulated number of troops, and maintain them at their own expence; but this agreement, which was only binding to their honesty, gave them little concern. Their ambition made them already think themselves in possession of those treasures that had been heaped up in those vast regions for so many ages.

THE ambitious views of the French, and their projects of conquest, were still more visionary. They purposed to obtain a cession of the capital of the Portuguese colonies, and to seize upon the district of a triangular form, which lies between Masulipatam, Goa, and Cape Comorin.

IN the mean time, till they could realize these brilliant chimeras, they considered the personal honours that were lavished upon Dupleix as a presage of the greatest prosperity. It is well known, that every foreign colony is in some degree odious to the natives; it is therefore good policy to endeavour to lessen

lessen this aversion, and the surest way to attain that end is, to conform as much as possible to the customs and manners of the country. This maxim, which is in general true, is more particularly so in countries where the people think but little, and is consequently so in India.

THE inclination which the French commander had for Asiatic pomp, was still a further inducement with him to conform to the customs of the country. He was exceedingly rejoiced when he saw himself invested with the dignity of a nabob. That title put him upon a level with those whose protection he solicited before, and afforded him considerable opportunities to pave the way for those great revolutions he meditated, in order to promote the important interests he was intrusted with. He entertained still greater hopes on being appointed governor of all the Mogul possessions, throughout an extent little inferior to the whole kingdom of France. All the revenues of those rich provinces were to be deposited in his hands, and he was accountable to none but the subah himself.

THOUGH these agreements entered into by merchants could not be very pleasing to the court of Delhi, they were not much afraid of its resentment. The emperor, being in want of men and money, which the subahs, the nabobs, the rajas, his meanest delegates, took upon themselves to refuse him, found himself attacked on all sides.

THE Rajaputes, descended from those Indians with whom Alexander had been engaged in battle, being driven out of their lands by the Moguls, took shelter in some mountains that are almost inaccessible. Continual disturbances put it out of their power to think of conquests; but in the intervals of their dissensions, they

they make inroads that cannot fail of harassing an empire already exhausted.

THE Patans are more formidable enemies. Driven by the Moguls from most of the thrones of Indostan, they have taken refuge at the foot of mount Imaïs, which is a continuation of the Caucasus. That situation has strangely altered their manners, and given them a fierceness of temper which they had not in a milder climate. War is their chief employment. They serve alike under the banners of Indian or Mohammedan princes; but their obedience is not equal to their valour. Whatever crime they may have been guilty of, it is dangerous to punish them; for they are so vindictive, that they will murder when they are weak, and revolt when they are strong enough to attempt any bold enterprize. Since the reigning power has lost its strength, the nation has shaken off the yoke. Not many years ago, their generals carried on their ravages as far as Delhi, and did not quit that capital till they had plundered it.

To the north of Indostan is a nation, which, though lately known, is the more formidable for being a new enemy. This people, distinguished by the name of Scheiks, have found means to free themselves from the chains of despotism and superstition, though surrounded by nations of slaves. They are said to be followers of a philosopher of Thibet, who inspired them with some notions of liberty, and taught them Theism without any mixture of superstition. They first appeared in the beginning of the present century; but were then considered rather as a sect than as a nation. During the calamities of the Mogul empire, their number increased considerably by apostates of all religions, who joined with them, and sought shelter among them from the oppressions and fury of their tyrants. To be admitted of that society,

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ety, nothing more is required than to swear implacable hatred against monarchy. It is asserted, that they have a temple with an altar, on which stands their code of laws, and next to it a scepter and a dagger: Four old men are elected, who occasionally consult the law, which is the only supreme power this republic obeys. The Scheiks actually possess the whole province of Punjal, the greatest part of the Moultan and the Sindi, both banks of the Indus from Cassimere to Tatta, and all the country towards Delhi from Lahot to Serhend: they can raise an army of sixty thousand good cavalry.

BUT of all the enemies of the Moguls, none are, perhaps, so dangerous as the Marattas. This nation, of late so famous, so far as the obscurity of their origin and history will allow us to conjecture, possessed several provinces of Indostan, from whence they were driven by the fear or the arms of the Moguls. They fled into the mountains which extend from Surat to Goa, and there formed several tribes, which in process of time united into one state, of which Satarah was the capital.

MOST of them carried vice and licentiousness to all the excesses which might be expected from an ignorant people, who have cast off the yoke of prejudices, without substituting wholesome laws and sound learning in their stead. Tired of laudable and peaceful labours, they thought of nothing but rapine. Yet this was confined to the plundering of a few villages, and the robbing of some caravans; till the coast of Coromandel, being threatened by Aurengzebe, made them sensible of their strength, by imploring their assistance.

AT this period they were seen coming out of their rocks, mounted on small and ill-shaped horses, but stout and accustomed to indifferent feeding, to difficult

cult roads, and to excessive fatigue. The whole accoutrement of a Maratta horseman consisted of a turban, a girdle, and a cloak. His provisions were a little bag of rice, and a leather bottle full of water. His only weapon was an excellent sabre.

NOTWITHSTANDING the assistance of these barbarians, the Indian princes were forced to bend to the yoke of Aurengzebe; but the conqueror weary of contending with irregular troops, which were continually ravaging the newly-reduced provinces, determined to conclude a treaty that would have been dishonourable, had it not been dictated by necessity, which is stronger than prejudices, oaths, and laws. He ceded for ever to the Marattas the fourth part of the revenues of the Decan, a subahship formed out of all his usurpations in the peninsula.

THIS kind of tribute was regularly paid as long as Aurengzebe lived. After his death, it was granted or refused according to circumstances. The levying of it brought the Marattas in arms to the remotest parts of their mountains. Their boldness increased during the anarchy of Indostan. They have made the empire tremble; they have deposed monarchs; they have extended their frontiers; they have granted their protection to rajas and nabobs who strove to be independent, and their influence has been unbounded.

WHILST the court of Delhi was with difficulty contending with so many enemies, all conspiring to effect its ruin, M. de Busly, who with a small corps of French troops and an army of Indians had conducted Salabat-jing to Aurengabad his capital, endeavoured to establish him on the throne where he had placed him. The weakness of the prince, the conspiracies which it occasioned, the firmans or privileges which had been granted to rivals, and other impediments, obstructed but could not subvert his projects.

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By his means the prince reigned more peaceably under the protection of the French than could have been expected, considering the circumstances of this situation; and he preserved him absolutely independent of the head of the empire.

CHUNDA-SAEB, appointed nabob of the Carnatic, was not in so happy a situation. The English, ever in opposition to the French, had stirred up a rival against him named Mohammed-Ali-Kan. The names of those two princes served as a pretence for carrying on a vigorous war between the two nations: they fought for glory, for wealth, and to serve the passions of their respective commanders, Duplex and Saunders. Victory declared alternately for each army. Success would not have been so fluctuating, had the governor of Madras had more troops, or the governor of Pondicherry better officers. It was difficult to conjecture which of those two men, who were both of the same inflexible temper, would in the end obtain the superiority; but it was very certain that neither would submit, whilst he had either troops or money left. Nor was it likely that either of them would soon be reduced to this extremity, notwithstanding their amazing efforts, because they both found such resources in their hatred and their genius, as even the most able men could not have any conception of. It was evident that the disturbances in the Carnatic would not be at an end, unless the peace was first settled in Europe; and it was to be feared that the flame which had been confined to India for six years might spread further. The ministers of France and England obviated this danger, by enjoining the two companies to fix certain terms of agreement. They made a conditional treaty, which began by suspending all hostilities at the commencement of the year 1755, and was to end by establishing
between

between them a perfect equality of territory, of strength, and of trade, on the coasts of Coromandel and Orixá. This stipulation had not yet received the sanction of the courts of London and Versailles, when greater interests kindled a fresh war between the two nations.

THE report of this great contest, which began in North America, and spread itself throughout the universe, reached the East-Indies at a time when the English were engaged in a very intricate war with the subah of Bengal. Had the French been then in the same state they were some years before, they would have joined with the natives. From narrow views and ill-judged interests, they were desirous of entering into a formal convention, to secure the neutrality which had subsisted on the banks of the Ganges during the last disturbances. Their rivals amused them with the hopes of settling this convention, so long as they wanted to keep them in a state of inaction. But as soon as their successes had enabled them to make their own terms, they attacked Chandernagore. The reduction of this place was followed by the ruin of all the factories dependent upon it, and put the English in a condition to send men, money, provisions, and ships, to the coast of Coromandel, where the French were just arrived with considerable land and sea-forces.

War between the English and French. The French lose all their settlements.

THESE forces, destined to protect the settlements of their own nation and destroy those of the enemy, were more than sufficient to answer both those purposes. The only point was to make a proper use of them; but there was a mistake in this from the beginning, as will plainly appear from the following observations.

BEFORE the commencement of the war the company possessed on the coasts of Coromandel and

Orixa, Masulipatam, with five provinces; a large circuit of land about Pondicherry, which for a long time before had been nothing but a sand-bank; and an extent nearly of the same size in the neighbourhood of Karical; and, lastly, the island of Seringham. These possessions made four tracts of country, too far distant to support each other. They bore the marks of the wild fancy and extravagant imagination of Dupleix, who had made these acquisitions.

THESE political errors might have been amended. Dupleix, who compensated for his defects by his great qualities, had acquired so great an influence that he was offered the perpetual government of the Carnatic. It was the most flourishing province in all the Mogul empire. By singular and fortunate circumstances, it had been governed successively by three nabobs of the same family, who had been equally attentive to agriculture and industry. General felicity had been the result of this mild government and public-spirited conduct, and the public revenues had increased to twelve millions (525,000*l.*) A sixth part of this sum would have been given to Salabat-jing, and the rest would have been for the company.

If the ministry and the direction, who alternately supported and neglected their power in India, had but been capable of a firm and settled resolution, they might have sent orders to their agent to give up all the remote conquests, and to be content with that important settlement. It was alone sufficient to give the French a firm establishment, a compact territory in which the settlements would be contiguous, a very large quantity of merchandize, provisions for their fortified towns, and revenues capable of maintaining a body of troops, which would have enabled them to brave the jealousy of their neighbours, and the

the hatred of their enemies. Unfortunately for them, the court of Versailles ordered that Dupleix should not accept of the Carnatic; and affairs remained as they were before that proposal.

THE situation was critical. Dupleix was, perhaps, the only man who could support himself in it; or in his stead the celebrated officer who had had the greatest share in his confidence, and was best acquainted with his schemes. The contrary opinion prevailed. Dupleix had been recalled. The general, who was appointed to conduct the Indian war, imagined he must demolish a structure which ought only to have been supported in those troublesome times, and discovered his designs in so public a manner, as contributed greatly to heighten the imprudence of his resolutions.

THIS man, whose ungovernable temper could never adapt itself to circumstances, had received from nature no qualities that fitted him for command. He was governed by a gloomy, impetuous, and irregular imagination; so that there was a perpetual contrast between his conversation and his projects, and between his projects and his actions. Passionate, suspicious, jealous, and positive to excess, he created an universal diffidence and dejection, and excited animosities never to be suppressed. His military operations, his civil government, his political combinations, all bore evident marks of the confusion of his ideas.

THE evacuation of the island of Seringham was the principal cause of the disasters that attended the war with Tanjour. Masulipatam and the northern provinces were lost, from having given up the alliance of Salabat-jing. The inferior powers of the Carnatic, who no longer respected the French for the sake of their old friend the subah of the Decan, completed the general ruin by espousing other interests.

ON the other hand, the French Squadron, though superior to the English, with which it had engaged three several times without gaining any advantage over it, at last was obliged to leave it master of the seas, by which the fate of India was decided. Pondicherry, after struggling with all the horrors of famine, was forced to surrender on the 15th of January 1761. Lally had, the day before, corrected a plan of capitulation drawn up by the council; he had named deputies to carry it to the enemy's camp; and, by a contradiction that was characteristic of the man, he gave the deputies a letter for the English general, in which he told him, *he would have no capitulation, because the English were such people that they would not adhere to it.*

IN taking possession of the place, the conqueror caused not only the troops that had defended it, but all the French in the company's service, to be shipped off for Europe; and, not satisfied even with that revenge, they destroyed Pondicherry, and made that noble city a heap of ruins.

THOSE of the inhabitants who were sent over to France, arrived in despair, at having lost their fortunes, and seen their houses demolished as they quitted the shore. They filled Paris with their clamours; they excited the indignation of the public against their governor: they impeached him as the author of all their miseries, and the sole cause of the loss of a flourishing colony. Lally was taken up, and tried by the parliament. He had been accused of high treason and extortion; of the first he was acquitted, and the second was never proved; yet Lally was condemned to lose his head.

LET us ask, in the name of humanity, what his crime was, that it should be punishable by law? The awful sword of justice was not put into the hands
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of the magistrate to gratify private resentment, or even to follow the emotions of public indignation. The law alone must point out its own victims; and, if the clamours of a blind and incensed multitude could sway with the judges to pronounce a capital sentence, the innocent might suffer for the guilty, and there would be no safety for the citizen. In this point of view let us examine the sentence.

It declares, that Lally stands convicted of *having betrayed the interests of the king, of the state, and of the India company*. What is meant by betraying of interests? What law is there that makes it death to be guilty of this vague and indefinite crime? No such law either does or can exist. The disgrace of the prince, the contempt of the nation, public infamy, these are the proper punishments for the man, who from incapacity or folly, has not served his country as he ought: but death, and that too upon a scaffold, is destined for crimes of a different nature.

THE sentence further declares, that Lally stands convicted of *vexations, exactions, and abuse of authority*. No doubt he was guilty of these in numberless instances. He made use of violent means to procure pecuniary aids; but this money was put into the public treasure. He injured and oppressed the citizens; but he never attempted any thing against their lives, or against their honour. He erected gibbets in the market-place, but caused no one to be executed upon them.

In reality, he was a madman of a dark and dangerous cast; an odious and despicable man; a man totally incapable of command. But he was neither guilty of public extortions, nor treason; and, to use the expression of a philosopher whose virtues do honour to humanity, *every one had a right to kill Lally, except the executioner*.

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Causes of
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THE misfortunes that befell the French in Asia had been foreseen by all considerate men, who reflected on the corruption of the nation. Their morals especially had degenerated in the voluptuous climate of India. The wars which Dupleix had carried-on in the inland parts had laid the foundation of many fortunes. They were increased and multiplied by the gifts which Salabat-jing lavished on those who conducted him in triumph to his capital, and fixed him on the throne. The officers who had not shared the dangers, the glory, and the benefits of those brilliant expeditions, found out an expedient to comfort themselves under their misfortune; which was, to reduce the sipahi's to half the number they were ordered to maintain, and to apply their pay to their own benefit; which they could easily do, as the money passed through their hands. The agents for trade, who had not these resources, accounted to the company but for a very small part of the profits made upon the European goods they sold, though they ought to have been all their own; and sold them those of India at a very high price, which they ought to have had at prime-cost. Those who were intrusted with collecting the revenue of any particular spot, farmed it themselves under Indian names, or let it for a trifle, upon receiving a handsome gratuity; they even frequently kept back the whole income of such estates, under pretence of some imaginary robbery or devastation, which had made it impossible to collect it. All undertakings, of what nature soever, were clandestinely agreed upon; and became the prey of the persons employed in them, who had found means to make themselves formidable, or of such as were most in favour, or richest. The authorized abuse that prevails in India, of giving and receiving presents on the conclusion of every treaty, had multiplied

plied these transactions without necessity. The navigators who landed in those parts, dazzled with the fortunes which they saw increased fourfold from one voyage to another, no longer regarded their ships, but as the means of carrying on trade, and acquiring wealth. Corruption was brought to its greatest height by people of rank, who had been disgraced and ruined at home; but who, being encouraged by what they saw, and impelled by the reports that were brought to them, resolved to go themselves into Asia, in hopes of retrieving their shattered fortunes, or of being able to continue their irregularities with impunity. The personal conduct of the directors made it necessary for them to connive at all these disorders. They were reproached with attending to nothing in their office but the credit, the money, and the power it gave them; with giving the most important posts to their own relations, men of no morals, application, or capacity; with multiplying the number of factors without necessity and without bounds, to secure friends in the city and at court; and, lastly, they were accused of obtruding upon the public commodities which might have been bought cheaper and better in other places. Whether the government did not know of these excesses, or had not resolution enough to put a stop to them, it was, by its blindness or its weakness, in some measure accessory to the ruin of the affairs of the nation in India. It might even without injustice be charged with being the principal cause of them, by sending such improper persons to manage and defend an important settlement, which had no less to fear from its own corruption, than from the English fleets and armies.

THE misfortunes of the company abroad were aggravated by their situation at home. It was immediately thought adviseable to lay a clear account

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of affairs before the proprietors. This discovery occasioned a general despondency, which gave rise to a variety of different schemes, all equally absurd. These several schemes were hastily discussed, nor was it possible that any of them could be fixed upon by men in such a state of uncertainty and diffidence. The deliberations were carried on with too much asperity; and time, which was of so much consequence, was lost in upbraidings and invectives. No one could foresee where these commotions would end; when a young merchant of penetration and judgment arose. The proprietors listened to him with attention; all disputes immediately subsided, and fresh hopes began to dawn. They were unanimous in adopting his opinion. The company, which the enemies to all exclusive privileges wished to see abolished, and which so many private interests had conspired to destroy, still maintained its ground: but it was put upon a better footing; a circumstance which was absolutely necessary.

AMONGST the causes that had occasioned the distresses of the company, there was one which had long been looked upon as the source of all the rest; this was the dependence, or rather the slavery, in which the government had kept that great body for near half a century.

EVER since the year 1723, the directors had been chosen by the court. In 1730, a commissary appointed by the king was introduced into the administration of the company. From this period there was an end to all freedom of debate; there was no longer any connection between those who had the management of affairs and the proprietors; no immediate intercourse between the managers and government. All was directed by the influence and according to the views of the court. Mystery, that dangerous veil of arbitrary

arbitrary administration, concealed all their operations; and it was not till 1744 that the proprietors were called together. They were empowered to name syndics, and to call a general meeting once a year; but they were not better informed of the state of their affairs, nor more at liberty to direct them. The power of choosing the directors was still vested in the crown, and instead of one commissary the king chose to have two.

FROM this time two parties were formed. Each commissary had his own scheme, his own favourites, and endeavoured to get his own projects adopted. Hence arose divisions, intrigues, informations, and animosities, which originated in Paris, and extended as far as India, and there broke out in a manner so fatal to the nation.

THE ministry, shocked at such a number of abuses, and weary of those endless contests, attempted to remedy them. It was imagined they had succeeded by appointing a third commissary. This expedient, however, served only to increase the evil. Despotism had prevailed while there was but one; division ensued on the nomination of two; and from the moment three were appointed, all was anarchy and confusion. They were reduced to two, and pains were taken to preserve harmony as much as possible between them; and in 1764 there was but one, when the proprietors desired that the company might be brought back to its original form, by restoring its freedom.

THEY ventured to tell the government, they might impute the disasters and errors of the company to themselves, as the proprietors had not been concerned in the management of their affairs; that they could never be carried on most advantageously both for them and for the state, till this could be done with freedom, and till an immediate intercourse was established between the proprietors and administrators, and between the administrators and the ministry; that whenever there

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there was an intermediate person, the orders given on one part, and the reports made on the other, would necessarily, in passing through his hands, take a tincture of his own private views and inclinations, so that he would always be, in fact, the real and sole manager of the company; that such a manager, not being himself personally concerned in the affairs of the company, or not being a competent judge of them, would always sacrifice the welfare and true interest of trade, to add to the transient pomp of his appointment, and to secure the favour of placemen; that, on the contrary, every thing might be expected from a free administration, chosen by the proprietors, acting under their inspection, and in concert with them, and subject to no kind of restraint.

THE government was sensible of the truth of these reasons. It secured the freedom of the company by a solemn edict; and the same merchant, who by his genius had just given it a new existence, drew up a plan of provisionary statutes, for a new form of administration.

THE intention of these statutes was that the company might no longer be ruled by men who often were not worthy to be its factors; that the government might no further interfere than to protect it: that it might be alike preserved from that slavery under which it had so long groaned, and from that spirit of mystery which had perpetuated its corruption; that there should be a constant intercourse between the managers and the proprietors; that Paris, deprived of the advantage enjoyed by the capitals of other commercial nations, of being a sea-port, might acquire a knowledge of trade in free and peaceable assemblies; that the citizen might form just notions of that powerful tie that connects all nations together, and by informing himself of the sources of public prosperity, learn

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to respect the merchant whose operations contribute to it, and to despise the professions that are destructive of it.

THESE wise regulations were attended with happier consequences than could possibly be expected. A great activity was observed on all sides. During the five years that the new administration lasted, the sales produced annually 18,000,000 (787,500*l.*) They had not been so considerable, even in those times which had been looked upon as the most prosperous; for, from 1726 to 1756 inclusively, they had amounted to no more than 437,376,284 *livres*, (19,135,212*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.*) which makes upon an average, in peace and war, 14,108,912 (617,264*l.* 18*s.*) *livres* a year.

It must be confessed, that since the year 1764 the profits had not been what they were before. The difference between the purchase and the sale, which had been at least cent. per cent. was reduced to about seventy per cent. This diminution of profit was owing to the want of stock, to the ruin of the French credit in India, and to the exorbitant power of the victorious nation that had lately subdued those distant regions. The agents for the company were reduced to procure money and goods upon the most exorbitant terms. They obtained both from the English merchants, who were endeavouring to bring over to Europe the immense fortunes they had amassed in Asia.

WITH these impediments, and under these disagreeable circumstances, was the exclusive privilege of trading to the East Indies exercised, when the government thought proper to suspend it. Let us now examine what was then the situation of the company.

BEFORE 1764, the number of shares amounted to 50,268. At that period the ministry, who, in 1746, 1747, and 1748, had given up to the proprietors the produce of the shares and bonds which were their property,

These measures are insufficient. The trade of individuals is substituted to that

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property, relinquished in their favour the shares and bonds themselves, to the number of 11,835 together, to indemnify them for the expences they had incurred during the last war. These shares having been cancelled, there remained but 38,432.

THE wants of the company obliged them to make a call of 400 livres (17l. 10s.) per share. Upwards of 34,000 shares paid the call. The 4000 that did not were reduced, by the terms of the edict which empowered the company to make it, to five-eighths of the value of those which had paid; so that by this operation the number was reduced to 36,920 whole shares and six-eighths.

THE dividends on the shares of the French company, as of all other companies, have varied according to circumstances. In 1722 it was 100 livres (4l. 7s. 6d.) From 1723 to 1745 it was 150 (6l. 11s. 3d.) From 1746 to 1749 it was 70 (3l. 1s. 3d.) From 1750 to 1758 it was 80 (3l. 10s.) From 1759 to 1763 it was 40 (1l. 15s.); and in 1764 it was but 20 livres (17s. 6d.) This shews that the dividend, and the value of the stock, which always kept pace with it, was necessarily affected by the hazards of trade, and the fluctuation of popular opinion. Hence that prodigious rise and fall in the price of the shares, which fell in one year from two hundred (167l. 18s.) to one hundred pistoles; (N. B. Each pistole is reckoned at 16s. 9d.) then rose to 1800 livres (78l. 15s.) and soon after fell to 700 (30l. 12s. 6d.) Yet, in the midst of these revolutions, the stock of the company was much the same. But this is a calculation which the public never makes. It is determined by the circumstance of the present moment, and always trusts or fears beyond the truth.

THE proprietors, who were under apprehensions of having their fortunes reduced to half in one day, would

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no longer run the risques of such a situation. In laying-in a fresh stock to trade with, they desired to secure the remainder of their fortune in such a manner, as that the shares should at all times bear a settled price, and an interest that could be depended upon. The government settled this matter by an edict issued out in August 1764. The XIIIth article expressly says, That, to secure to the proprietors a settled income independent of all future events of trade, a sufficient fund should be detached from that portion of the contract which was then free, to secure to every share a capital of 1600 livres, (70l.) and an interest of 80 livres (3l. 10s.); and that *neither that interest nor that capital should, in any case, or for any cause whatsoever, be answerable for such engagements as the company might enter into after the date of this edict.*

THE company, therefore, owed for 36,920 shares and six eighths, at the rate of 80 livres (3l. 10s.) per share, an interest amounting to 2,953,660 livres (129,222l. 12s. 6d.) They paid for their several contracts 2,727,506 livres, (119,328l. 7s. 9d.) which made in all 5,681,166 livres (248,551l. 0s. 3d.) of perpetual annuities. The life annuities amounted to 3,074,899 livres (134,526l. 16s. 7d. $\frac{1}{2}$) The sum total of all these life annuities and annual payments was then 8,756,065 livres (383,577l. 16s. 10d. $\frac{1}{2}$). How the company raised money to answer these several demands, shall be the subject of our next inquiry.

THAT great body, which had been much too deeply concerned in Law's scheme, had advanced him 90,000,000 of livres (3,937,500l.) When that system failed, the government made over to them in payment the exclusive sale of tobacco, which then brought in three millions (131,250l.) a year; but they were left without a capital to trade with. This kept them in a state of inaction till 1726, when the government
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lent them its assistance. The rapid progress they made astonished all nations, and seemed to promise them a superiority over the most flourishing companies. This opinion, which was the general one, emboldened the proprietors to complain that their dividends were not doubled and trebled. They thought, as well as the public, that the king's treasury was enriched with their spoils. The profound secrecy with which every thing was carried on, greatly strengthened these surmises.

THE breaking-out of the war between France and England in 1744 dissolved the charm. The ministry, too much embarrassed in their own affairs to think of doing any thing for the company, left it to extricate itself. Then, indeed, every one was surprized to see that Colossus ready to fall, which had never yet met with any shock, and whose greatest misfortune had been the loss of two ships of a moderate value. The company would have been ruined, had not the government in 1747 declared itself their debtor in the sum of 180,000,000 of livres, (7,875,000*l.*) and engaged to pay them the interest of that sum for ever at five per cent. This engagement, which was in lieu of the exclusive sale of tobacco, is so important a point in the history of the company, that it would not be sufficiently illustrated, if we did not trace the matter further back.

THE use of tobacco, which was introduced into Europe after the discovery of America, made no very rapid progress in France. The consumption was so small, that the first contract, which began the first of December 1674, and ended the first of October 1680, brought in but 500,000 livres (21,875*l.*) to the government the two first years, and 600,000 (26,250*l.*) the four last; though the right of stamping pewter had been joined to this privilege. This farm of the
revenue

revenue was confounded with the general farms till 1691, when it still remained united to them, and was rated at 1,500,000 livres (65,625l.) a year. In 1697, it became once more a separate farm on the same terms, till 1709, when it was increased to 100,000 livres (4,375l.) more, till 1715. It was then renewed for three years only. The two first years ought to have produced 2,000,000 of livres, (87,500l.) and the last 200,000 (8,750l.) more. At that period it was increased to 4,020,000 livres (175,875l.) a year; but this lasted only from the first of October 1718 to the first of June 1720. Tobacco then became a mercantile commodity all over the kingdom, and continued so till the first of September 1721. During this short interval, private people laid in such a stock, that when it came to be farmed out again, it could be done but at a moderate price. This contract, which was the eleventh, was for nine years, to commence on the first of September 1721, to the first of October 1730. The farmers were to give 1,300,000 livres (56,875l.) for the first thirteen months; 1,800,000 (78,750l.) for the second year; 2,560,000 (112,000l.) for the third; and 3,000,000 (131,250l.) for each of the last six years. This agreement did not take place, because the India company, to whom the government owed 90,000,000 of livres, (3,937,500l.) which had been deposited in the royal treasury in 1717, demanded the farm of tobacco, which had then been made over to them for ever, and which, from particular events, they had never yet enjoyed. Their petition was found to be just, and they obtained what they so warmly solicited.

THEY managed this farm themselves, from the first of October 1723, to the last day of September 1730. The produce during that space was
50,083,967

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50,083,967 livres 11 sous 9 deniers (about 2,191,173*l.* 11*s.* 7*d.* $\frac{1}{2}$) which made 7,154,852 livres 10 sols 3 den. (about 313,024*l.* 16*s.*) a year; out of this must be deducted yearly 3,042,963*l.* 19*s.* 6*d.* (about 133,129*l.* 12*s.* 7*d.* $\frac{1}{2}$) for the charges of preparing the land.

THESE charges were so enormous, that it was thought the business, which grew every day more considerable, would be better in the hands of the farmers-general, who would manage it at less expence by means of the clerks they employed for other purposes. The company accordingly farmed it for eight years, at the rate of 7,500,000 livres (328,125*l.*) for each of the first four years, and 8,000,000 (350,000*l.*) for each of the four last. This contract was continued upon the same terms till the month of June 1747; and the king promised to account with the company for the increase of the produce, as soon as it should be known and ascertained.

AT this period, the king united the tobacco farm to his other duties, creating and alienating, for the use of the company, an annuity of nine millions (393,750*l.*) for ever, upon a capital of an hundred and eighty millions (7,875,000*l.*) This large compensation was thought to be due to them for the old debt of ninety millions (3,937,500*l.*); for the overplus of the profit upon the tobacco farm, from 1738 to 1747; and to indemnify them for the expences of the negroe trade, for the losses they had sustained during the war, for their giving up the exclusive privilege of the trade to St. Domingo, and for the loss of the ton duty, which has been suspended ever since the year 1731. Yet this compensation has been thought inadequate by some of the proprietors, who have discovered, that ever since the year 1758, upwards
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of 11,700,000 pounds weight of tobacco have been annually sold in the kingdom at three livres (2s. 7d. $\frac{1}{2}$.) a pound, though it had been bought for twenty-seven livres (1l. 3s. 7d. $\frac{1}{2}$.) a hundred.

THE nation is of a very different opinion. The managers, who prevailed upon government to acknowledge so large a debt, have been accused of sacrificing the interest of the public to that of a private society. A writer who in our days should examine whether this accusation were well or ill-grounded, would pass for an idle man. Such a discussion would be altogether needless, since every circumstance of this transaction has been made public. It will be sufficient to observe, that it was with the nine millions (393,750l.) a year improperly sacrificed by the state, that the company was enabled to answer the demand of 8,756,065 livres (383,077l. 16s. 10d. $\frac{1}{2}$.) with which it was charged, so that the overplus remaining to them amounted to about 244,000 livres (10,675l.) of net revenue.

IT is true, they had private simple-contract debts to the amount of 74,505,000 livres (3,259,593l. 15s.); but they had in trade, in stock, or in debts to call in, 70,733,000 livres (3,094,568l. 15s.); a sum nearly sufficient to balance their accounts.

THEIR only riches consisted therefore in moveable and unmoveable effects, to the amount of about twenty millions (875,000l.) and the prospect of the extinction of the life annuities, which in time must bring in three millions (131,250l.) a year. The actual value of this article might be reckoned equal to a clear capital of thirty millions (1,312,500l.)

INDEPENDENT of these properties, the company enjoyed some very beneficial rights. The exclusive sale of coffee had been granted them; but as public utility required that an exception should be made in

1736, with regard to coffee imported from the American islands, they obtained by way of compensation a yearly sum of 50,000 livres (2,187l. 10s.) which was always duly paid. Even the privilege for Mocha coffee was cancelled in 1767, the government having allowed the importation of that of the Levant. The company obtained no indemnification on this account.

THEY had experienced a greater loss the year before. In 1720 they had been invested with the sole right of transporting slaves to the American colonies. This system soon appeared to be erroneous; and it was agreed that all the merchants in the kingdom should be at liberty to carry on the slave trade, upon condition of adding a pistole (16s. 9d.) per head to the thirteen livres (11s. 4d. $\frac{1}{2}$.) granted out of the royal treasury. Supposing that 15,000 negroes were disposed of every year in the French islands, this made a clear income of 345,000 livres (15,093l. 15s.) for the company. This bounty, which was allowed them for a trade they were not concerned in, was taken-off in 1767, and was made-up to them by a more reasonable equivalent.

AT the first formation of the company they had obtained a gratuity of 50 livres (2l. 3s. 9d.) upon every ton of goods they should export, and of 75 (3l. 5s. 7d. $\frac{1}{2}$.) upon every ton they should import from abroad. The ministry, upon the suppression of the bounty upon negroes, increased the gratuity upon every ton exported to 75 livres (3l. 5s. 7d. $\frac{1}{2}$.) and upon every ton imported to 80 (3l. 10s.) If we rate both at 6000 tons a year, we shall find a produce of above a million (43,750l.) for the company, including the 50,000 livres (2,187l. 10s.) they received upon the coffee.

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WHILE the income of the company remained entire, their expences were lessened. By the edict of 1764, the islands of France and Bourbon were become the property of the government, who engaged to fortify and defend them: By this arrangement the company was exonerated of two millions (87,500*l.*) a year, without the least detriment to the exclusive trade they enjoyed in those two islands.

WITH all these seemingly prosperous circumstances, the debts of the company were daily increasing. This must inevitably happen, as their income, together with the profits of their trade, was not sufficient to defray the expences of carrying it on, and the charges annexed to the crown, which amounted together to eight millions (350,000*l.*) a year. They might even exceed this, as by their nature they were susceptible of endless increase, according to the political views of government, which is the sole judge of their importance and necessity.

IN so unfortunate a situation, the company could not possibly support itself without the assistance of government. But for some time past the council of Lewis XV. had appeared to be very indifferent about the existence of that great body. At last an arret of council was issued, bearing date the 13th of August 1769, by which the king suspended the exclusive privilege of the India company, and granted to all his subjects the liberty of navigating and trading beyond the Cape of Good Hope. However, in granting this unexpected freedom, the government thought proper to lay it under some restraint. The arret which opens this new tract to private navigators, requires them to provide themselves with passports, which are to be freely given by the administrators of the India company. It obliges them to make their returns to Port l'Orient, and no where else. It esta-

blishes a duty by way of Indulto on all goods imported from India; which, by a second arret of council, issued on the sixth of September following, was fixed at five per cent. on all goods coming from India and China; and at three per cent. upon all commodities of the growth of the islands of France and Bourbon.

THE arret of the 13th of August, by only suspending the privilege of the company, seemed to leave to the proprietors the power of resuming it: but, as they saw no probability of ever being able to do this, they wisely determined to liquidate their concerns in such a manner, as to secure their creditors, and the remains of their own fortunes.

FOR this purpose they offered to give up to the king all the company's ships, thirty in number; all the warehouses and other buildings belonging to them at Port l'Orient and in India; the property of their factories, with the manufactures dependent on them; all naval and military stores; and, lastly, eight hundred slaves which they had reserved in the islands. All these articles were valued at thirty millions (1,312,500l.) by the proprietors, who at the same time demanded the payment of 16,500,000 livres (721,875l.) which were due to them by the government.

THE king agreed to the proposal, but chose to lessen the purchase-money: not that the effects were not of still greater value while they remained in the hands of the company; but, being made over to the government, they brought an additional incumbrance upon it. So that, instead of 46,500,000 livres (2,039,375l.) which the proprietors demanded, the prince, to clear all accounts with them, created a perpetual annuity for their benefit of 1,200,000 livres (52,500l.) upon a capital of thirty millions (1,312,500l.)

(1,312,500*l.*) The edict for that purpose was issued out in January 1770.

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THIS new contract the company mortgaged for twelve millions (525,000*l.*) which they borrowed upon life annuities at ten per cent. and by a lottery in February following. This money was borrowed to enable them to fulfil the engagements they had entered into when they undertook the last expeditions; but it was insufficient; so that, finding themselves utterly unable to raise more, the proprietors, at their meeting on the 7th of April 1770, made over their whole property to the king, except the capital that had been mortgaged to the proprietors of the shares.

THE principal articles comprized in this cession, consisted in the abolition of 4,200,000 livres (183,750*l.*) in life annuities; of that part of the contract of nine millions (393,750*l.*) which exceeded the capital of the shares; of the hotel of Paris; of the India goods expected home in 1770 and 1771, supposed to be worth 26,000,000 of livres (1,137,500*l.*); and, lastly, of three or four millions (about 153,000*l.* upon an average) of debts, to be called in from debtors who were mostly solvent, in India, in the isles of France and Bourbon, and at San Domingo. The proprietors engaged at the same time to furnish the king with a sum of 14,768,000 livres (646,100*l.*) to be raised by way of a call, which was fixed at 400 livres (17*l.* 10*s.*) per share. The government, in accepting these several offers, engaged on their part to pay all the perpetual and life annuities which the company was bound to pay; all their other engagements, amounting to about forty-five millions (1,968,750*l.*); all the pensions and half-pays granted by the company, amounting to 80,000 livres (3,500*l.*) a-year; lastly, to stand to all the charges and

and risques attending a liquidation that must necessarily continue some years.

THE capital of each share, which by the edict of August 1764, had been fixed at 1600 livres (70*l.*) bearing an interest of 80 livres (3*l.* 10*s.*) the king now raised to 2500 livres (109*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.*) bearing interest 125 livres (5*l.* 9*s.* 4*d.* $\frac{1}{2}$.) a year. The new interest was made subject to a deduction of a tenth, and it was agreed that this deduction should be annually appropriated to the paying off the shares by lot, on the footing of their capital of 2500 livres (109*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.*); so that the interest on the shares thus paid off, would increase the sinking fund till the whole of the shares was finally paid off.

THESE respective conditions are recorded in an arret of council, of the 8th of April, including a report of the deliberations held the day before in a general meeting of the proprietors, and confirmed by letters patent bearing date the 22d of the same month. In consequence of these agreements, the call has been paid, a sufficiency for the reimbursement of the shares, to the number of two hundred and twenty, has been taken out every year, and the simple-contract debts of the company have been duly paid when their time was elapsed.

FROM all these particulars, it is no easy matter to frame an idea of the actual mode of existence of the India company, and of the legal state of the trade they carried on. This company, which at present has no property, no business, no object, cannot however be considered as being entirely destroyed, since the proprietors have reserved the joint stock that was mortgaged for their shares; and that they have a common chest, and deputies to superintend their interests. On the other hand, their charter has been suspended; but it is only suspended, and is not included

cluded among the articles which the company has ceded to the king. The law by which it was granted is still in force; and the ships that are fitted out for the Indian seas, cannot sail without a permission in the name of the company. So that the freedom which has been granted is but a precarious one; and if the proprietors should offer to resume their trade, with a sufficient stock to carry it on, they would have an undoubted right to do it without any new law to empower them. But except this nominal right, which in fact is much the same as if it did not exist, as the proprietors are not in a condition to exercise it; all their other rights, properties, and factories, are now in the hands of government. Let us take a cursory view of those settlements, beginning with Malabar.

BETWEEN the provinces of Canara and Calicut, lies a district which extends eighteen leagues along the coast, and is at most seven or eight leagues broad. The country, which is very unequal, abounds with pepper and cocoa-trees. It is divided into several less districts subject to as many Indian lords, who are all vassals to the house of Colastry. The head of this Bramin family is always to confine his whole attention to what concerns the worship of the gods. It would be beneath his dignity to stoop to profane matters; and the reins of government are given to his nearest relation. The country is divided into two provinces. In the largest, called the Irouvenate, is the English factory of Tellichery, and the Dutch factory of Cananor. These two nations share the pepper trade between them; but the English commonly carry off 1,500,000 pounds weight, and there seldom remains more than 500,000 for the Dutch.

THE second province, called Cartenate, extends but five leagues along the coast. Here the French

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upon the
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were called-in by the natives in 1722, with a view to engage them to act against the English; but an accommodation having taken place, and made their assistance unnecessary, they were forced to relinquish a post where they promised themselves some advantages. Fired with resentment and ambition, they returned in greater numbers in 1725, and established themselves sword-in-hand on the mouth of the river Mahé. Notwithstanding this act of violence, they obtained of the prince, who governed that district, an exclusive right to the pepper trade. This favour was so great an advantage to them, that it gave rise to a colony of 6,000 Indians, who cultivated 6,350 cocoa trees, 3,967 areka, and 7,762 pepper trees. Such was the state of this settlement, when the English made themselves masters of it in 1760.

THE same spirit of destruction that they had shewn in all their conquests, influenced them at Mahé. Their intention was to pull down the houses, and disperse the inhabitants. The sovereign of that country dissuaded them from their purpose. All was spared, except the fortifications. When the French returned to their factory, they found every thing much in the same condition as they had left it. It is their interest to secure the advantages they enjoy, and it is no less incumbent on them to endeavour to improve them.

MAHE is surrounded with hills, on which were erected five forts, that no longer exist. These works were too numerous, though some precautions are absolutely necessary. It is not proper to be perpetually exposed to the depredations of the Nayers, who have formerly attempted to plunder and destroy the colony, and who might possibly have still the same intentions, in order to put themselves under the protection

tection of the English at Tellichery, which is but three leagues distant from Mahé. BOOK
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BESIDES the posts requisite to secure the place itself, it is very necessary to fortify the entrance of the river. Since the Marattas have got sea-ports of their own, they infest the sea about Malabar with their piracies. Those banditti even attempt to land wherever they think there is some booty to be got. Mahé would not be secure from their attacks, if it contained money or commodities to tempt them.

THE French might make themselves ample amends for any expences they should incur, if they did but carry on their trade with spirit and skill. Their factory is the best situated for the pepper trade; and the country would afford 2,500,000 pounds weight of that commodity. What could not be consumed in Europe might be sold in China, on the Red Sea, and at Bengal. A pound of pepper would stand them in twelve sous (about 6d. $\frac{1}{4}$.) and they would sell it for twenty-five or thirty (about 1s. 4d. on an average).

THIS advantage, considerable as it is, would be increased by the profits upon European goods which would be carried over to Mahé. Those who are best acquainted with that factory are of opinion, that it will be an easy matter to dispose of 400,000 weight of iron, 200,000 of lead, 25,000 of copper, 2000 firelocks, 20,000 weight of gun-powder, 50 anchors or grapplings, 50 bales of cloth, 50,000 ells of sail-cloth, a good quantity of quicksilver, and about 200 casks of wine or brandy, for the French settled in the colony, or for the English in the neighbourhood. These several articles together would produce at least 384,000 livres (16,800l.) of which 153,600 (6,720l.) would be clear gain, allowing the profit to be 40 per cent. Another advantage attending this circulation is, that there will always be a stock in the factory,

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tory, which will enable them to purchase the productions of the country in the seasons of the year when they are cheapest.

THE greatest obstacle to trade is the custom-house established in the colony. Half the duties belong to the sovereign of that country, and this has always been a subject of contention. The English of Tellichery, who laboured under the same grievance, have found means to prevent all disputes about these duties, by paying a certain yearly sum as an equivalent. The French might do the same; but they cannot expect that the prince would agree to it, unless they previously pay him the sums he has lent, and no longer refuse him the tribute stipulated for the benefit of living peaceably upon his territories. Matters cannot be so easily adjusted at Bengal.

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state of the
French at
Bengal.

FRANCE has engaged, by the treaty of 1763, to erect no fortifications and keep no troops in that rich and extensive country. The English, who are sovereigns there, will never suffer the French to deviate from what they have required. So that Chandernagore, which before the last war reckoned 60,000 souls, and has now but 24,000, is, and always will be, entirely an open place.

To this misfortune of a precarious situation may be added injuries and hardships of every kind. Not satisfied with the possession of unlimited authority, the English have been guilty of the most scandalous enormities. They have insulted the French in their work-shops; seduced their workmen, cut the linens off of the looms; insisted that the manufacturers should do no work but for them in the three best months of the year; and that their own ladings should be picked out and completed, before any thing was removed out of the work-shops. The scheme which the French and Dutch had contrived together, of making

making an exact estimate of the number of weavers, taking only half between them, and leaving the rest to the English, has been considered as an insult. That ruling nation have proceeded so far as to declare, that they would have their factors buy the goods in Chandernagore; and the French have been forced to submit to this hardship, or they would have been excluded from every market in Bengal. In a word, they have so much abused the unjust right of victory, that a philosopher might be tempted to wish for the ruin of their liberty, were not the people infinitely more oppressive and cruel under the government of one man, than under a government tempered by the influence of many.

As long as things remain upon the present footing in that opulent part of Asia, the French will meet with perpetual hardships and mortifications, and therefore no solid and lasting advantage can accrue to trade. They would be rescued from this disgrace, if they could exchange Chandernagore for Chatigan.

CHATIGAN is situated on the confines of Arracan. The Portuguese, who in the days of their prosperity endeavoured to get all the important posts in India into their own hands, made a considerable establishment at that place. Those who were settled there threw off the yoke of their native country, when it became a part of the Spanish dominions, chusing rather to turn pirates than to be slaves. They long infested the neighbouring coasts and seas with their depredations. At last they were attacked by the Moguls, who raised a colony upon their ruins, powerful enough to prevent any inroads which they people of Arracan and Pegu might be tempted to make into Bengal. This place then sunk into obscurity till 1758, when the English arrived and settled there.

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THE climate is healthy, the waters excellent, and provisions are in great plenty; the landing is easy, and the anchorage safe. The continent and the island of Sandiva make a tolerable harbour. The rivers Barramputri and Etki, which are branches of the Ganges, or at least communicate with it, greatly facilitate commercial operations. If Chatigan is further off of Patna, Cassimbuzar, and some other markets, than the European colonies on the river Hughly; it is near Jogdia, Dacca, and all the manufactures of the lower river. It is a matter of no consequence, whether ships of burden can or cannot enter the Ganges on that side, as the inland navigation is never carried on but with boats.

THOUGH the knowledge they had of these advantages had determined the English to seize upon Chatigan, we are apt to think they would have given it up at the last peace, to get rid of the French, and remove them from a place which lies too near them, and which long habit has endeared to them. We even presume, that at Chatigan the English would have desisted from those conditions they required at Chandernagore, which stamp a disgrace upon the possessors, more detrimental to the schemes of commerce than it is possible to conceive. Trade is a free profession. The sea, the voyages, the risque, and the vicissitudes of fortune, all inspire a love of independence. This gives life and spirit to trade, which when confined, languishes, and is lost.

THE present opportunity is, perhaps, a favourable one, to think of the exchange we propose. The fortifications which the English had begun to erect at Chatigan having been thrown down by frequent earthquakes, they have taken a dislike to the place. As to the French, this inconvenience, great as it is, would be preferable to that of living in a defenceless town.

town. It is better to strive against nature than against men, and be exposed to the shocks of the earth than to the insults of nations. The French, though restrained at Bengal, fortunately meet with some compensation, enjoying a better situation on the coast of Coromandel.

To the north of that very extensive coast, they possess Yanam, in the province of Rajahmundry. This factory, which has no land belonging to it, and is situated nine miles from the mouth of the river Ingerom, was formerly a very flourishing one. From mistaken motives it was neglected about the year 1748. It would, however, afford goods to the value of 4 or 500,000 livres (about 19,700*l*.) as the cotton manufactures are very considerable in that neighbourhood, and the cottons remarkably fine and good. It has been found by experience to be a good market for disposing of European cloth. The trade of this place would be more lucrative, if they were not obliged to share the profit with the English, who have a small settlement within two miles of the French.

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THE competition is much more detrimental to their interest at Masulipatam. The French, who formerly were masters of the whole town, but have nothing left now except the factory they had before 1749, cannot possibly contend with the English, who make them pay duty for all their imports and exports, and enjoy besides all the favour in their own trade which sovereignty can command. Things being thus circumstanced, the French confine their dealings to the purchase of some fine handkerchiefs and other calicoes, to the value of 150,000 livres (6,562*l*. 10*s*.) It is far otherwise at Karikal.

THAT town, situated in the kingdom of Tanjour, on one of the branches of the Caleroon, which will
bear

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bear ships of 150 tons burden, was ceded to the company in 1738, by a dethroned king, who was in want of protection. Having been restored before he had fulfilled his engagements, he retracted the gift he had made. A nabob attacked the place with his army, and in 1739 gave it up to the French, who were in friendship with him. Soon after this, the ungrateful and perfidious prince was strangled by the intrigues of his uncles; and his successor, who had inherited his enemies with his throne, being desirous of obtaining the friendship of a powerful nation, confirmed them in their possession. The English took the place in 1760, and blew up the fortifications. It was afterwards restored to the French, who returned thither in 1765.

In its present state, Karical is an open place, which may contain 15,000 inhabitants, most of them employed in weaving ordinary handkerchiefs and cottons, for the wear of the natives. The territory belonging to it, which has been considerably increased by the concessions which the king of Tanjour made in 1749, is now once more what it was at first, two leagues in length, and one league in the broadest part. It is composed of fifteen hamlets, of which one only deserves our notice; this is called Tirumale-Rayenpatnam, and contains no less than 25,000 souls. They weave and paint Persians that are pretty fine, fit for Batavia and the Philippine islands. The Coolies and Mohammedans have small vessels, with which they trade to Ceylon, and along the coast.

FRANCE may draw annually from this settlement, two hundred bales of cottons or handkerchiefs fit for Europe, and a large quantity of rice for the subsistence of her other colonies.

ALL goods bought at Karical, Yanam, and Masulipatam, are carried to Pondicherry, the chief settlement of the French in India. BOOK
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THIS town, which rose from such small beginnings, in time became a great, powerful, and famous city. The streets, which are all strait, and most of them broad, are lined with two rows of trees, which keep them cool even in the heat of the day. The most remarkable public edifices are a mosque, two pagodas, two churches, and the governor's house, which is reckoned the most magnificent building in the east. They had erected a small citadel in the year 1704; but it is of no use, since they have been allowed to build houses all round it. To supply the loss of this defence, three sides of the town had been fortified with a rampart, a ditch, bastions, and a glacis which was unfinished in some places. The road was defended by some batteries judiciously placed.

THE town, which was full a league in circumference, contained 70,000 inhabitants, of which 4000 were Europeans, Mestees, or Topasses. There were at most 10,000 Mohammedans; the rest were Indians, 15,000 of which were Christians, and the others of seventeen or eighteen different casts or tribes. Three villages, dependent on the town, might contain 10,000 souls.

SUCH was the state of the colony, when the English made themselves masters of it in the beginning of the year 1761, utterly destroyed it, and turned out the inhabitants. Others may, perhaps, examine whether the barbarous right of war could justify enormities. Let us turn away our eyes from so many cruelties committed by a free, magnanimous, and enlightened nation; and consider only the resolution France has taken to restore Pondicherry to its former

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mer splendour. Every thing concurs to justify the wisdom of this choice.

THIS town, like all others on the coast of Coromandel, has no harbour, but it has a much more commodious road. The ships can anchor close to the shore, under the cannon of the fortifications. Its territory, which is three leagues long and one league broad, is nothing more than a barren sand-bank on the sea-coast; but the greatest part is fit for the culture of rice, vegetables, and a root called chaya, which is used in dying. Two small rivers that cross the country, but are not navigable, afford excellent water for the same purpose, particularly for the blue dye. Three miles to the north-east of the town is a hill, which rises a hundred toises above the level of the sea, and is a guide to ships at the distance of seven or eight leagues; which is a very considerable advantage upon so flat a coast. At the top of this hill is a very large body of water, that has been collecting for ages, and, after refreshing and fertilizing a spacious territory, flows down to water the grounds about Pondicherry. Lastly, the colony is favourably situated for the reception of provisions and merchandise from the Carnatic, the kingdoms of Mysore and Tanjour.

SUCH were the important reasons which determined France to rebuild Pondicherry. As soon as her agents appeared on the 11th of April 1765, the unfortunate Indians, who had been dispersed by the calamities of war, and by political intrigues, flocked thither in great numbers. By the beginning of the year 1770, there were 27,000 who had rebuilt their ruined houses. They are all brought up in the idea that no man can be happy who does not die in the very place where he first saw the light. This prejudice, so pleasing to them, and which it may be so

useful

useful to keep up, will undoubtedly make them all return, as soon as the town is inclosed. The weavers, the dyers, the painters, the merchants, those who have some property to preserve, only wait for this security to follow their inclination.

IN their present state, the French factories in India are very expensive, and the returns from them inconsiderable. Unfortunately this disadvantage is not compensated by the islands of France and Bourbon, which have not attained to that degree of prosperity that might be expected.

THE latter of these islands was much extolled; but more speculation than industry was bestowed upon it, and the owners lost their time in conjectures concerning the use it might be put to.

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SOME were inclined to make a mart of it, where all India goods should center. They were to be brought thither on India bottoms, and then shipped on board French vessels, which were never to go any further. A double advantage was thought to arise from this scheme; first, in the lessening of expences, as both the pay and the maintenance of India sailors is very trifling; and, secondly, in the preservation of the ships crews, which are often destroyed by too long a voyage, and still more frequently by the climate, especially at Bengal and at Arabia. This system, which ought, perhaps, to have been adopted, was considered as impracticable, on account of the supposed necessity of maintaining a formidable fleet on the seas of Asia, to prevent or check the insults that are often committed in those parts.

OTHERS were of opinion that the inhabitants of the Isle of France should be allowed to trade to India, which they had never yet been suffered to do. The supporters of this system maintained that the proposed freedom would prove an abundant source

of wealth to the colony, and consequently to the mother-country. They might be in the right, but the trials that have been made have not proved successful; and, without examining whether this innovation had been judiciously conducted, it was resolved that the island should be entirely confined to agriculture.

THIS new regulation gave rise to fresh mistakes. Men were sent from Europe to the colony, who neither understood husbandry, nor were accustomed to labour. The lands were distributed at a venture, and without distinguishing what was to be cleared from what did not want it. Money was advanced to the planters, not in proportion to their industry, but to the interest they could make with the government. The company, who got cent. per cent. upon the commodities the colony drew from Europe, and fifty per cent. upon those that were sent in from India, required that the produce of the country should be delivered into their ware-houses at a very low price. The oppression of the monopoly was aggravated by the tyranny of endless and needless services. To complete the misfortunes of the colony, the company, who had kept all the power in their own hands, broke the engagements they had entered into with their subjects, or rather with their slaves.

UNDER such a government, no improvements could be expected. Nothing was carried on with steadiness. The culture of cotton, indigo, sugar, arnotto, pepper, tea, cocoa, were all tried, but with so little attention, that no advantage was procured from them. In pursuing chimerical projects, the essential cultures were neglected. Though in the year 1765, there were in the colony 1469 white people, besides the troops; 1587 Indians or free negroes; 11,881 slaves; their productions did not amount to
more

more than 320,650 pounds weight of wheat, 47,430 pounds of rice, 1,570,040 pounds of maize, 142,700 pounds of kidney-beans, 135,500 pounds of oats. Those who had an opportunity of seeing and observing the agriculture of the Isle of France, found it little better than what they had seen among the savages.

SOME useful alterations have been made in the colony since it has been in the hands of government. The culture of coffee has since been introduced there, as it had long been at Bourbon. This has been attended with so much success, that there is reason to expect, that six or seven millions weight may, in time, be gathered, if a prudent administration will only supply the means of improving this culture; since without such assistance, no colony can possibly prosper. These hopes have been encouraged by the prospect of another advantage.

It is well known that, for these two hundred years, the Dutch have been enriching themselves by the sale of cloves and nutmegs. To secure to themselves the exclusive trade of these articles, they have enslaved or utterly destroyed the nation that was in possession of those spices; and, lest the price of them should fall even in their own hands, they have rooted up most of the trees, and frequently burn the fruit of those they had preserved. This infamous avidity, which has so often excited the indignation of other nations, so strongly exasperated Mr. Poivre (who had travelled all over Asia as a naturalist and a philosopher), that he availed himself of the authority he was intrusted with in the Isle of France, and sent men into the least frequented parts of the Moluccas, to search for what avarice had hitherto withholden from the rest of the world. The labours of those intrepid

and sagacious navigators in whom he confided were crowned with success.

ON the 24th of June 1770, they brought to the Isle of France 400 nutmeg-trees; 10,000 nutmegs, either growing or ready to grow; 70 clove-trees, and a chest of cloves, some of which were growing, and already sprung up.

THIS rich prize was distributed amongst the colonists, to try all the different soils, and every aspect. Most of the young plants died, and the rest will not probably bear any fruit. But, whatever may happen, the Isle of France must always be allowed to be one of the most valuable possessions for any nation desirous of trading to Asia.

IT is situated in the African seas, just at the entrance of the Indian ocean. As it lies a little out of the common track, its expeditions can be carried on with greater secrecy. Those who wish it was nearer our continent, do not consider that, if it were so, it would be impossible to reach the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel in a month's time, and the most distant gulphs in two months at most, which is an inestimable advantage to a nation that has no sea-port in India. This island, though in the same latitude as the barren and scorching coasts of Africa, is temperate and healthful. The soil is stony, but tolerably fertile. Experience has shewn that it will produce most of the necessaries, and even of the luxuries of life. Whatever it may want may be supplied from Madagascar, which abounds with provisions; and from Bourbon, where the inhabitants have retained their simplicity of manners, and a taste for husbandry. The iron that may be wanted, and cannot be procured from those two islands, might be digged out of their own mines.

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GREAT BRITAIN sees, with a jealous eye, her rivals possessed of a settlement which may prove the ruin of her flourishing trade with Asia. At the breaking-out of a war, her utmost efforts will certainly be aimed at a colony that threatens her richest treasures. What a misfortune for France, should she suffer herself to be deprived of it!

YET this is by no means improbable, if we consider that hitherto there has been no settled plan for fortifying this island; that the means have always been wanting, or misapplied; that the ministry of Lewis XV. have constantly waited for the dispatches of the administrators to come to a determination, just as one would wait for the return of a courier from the frontiers. Far from supposing that the besiegers would meet with an insurmountable resistance, it is to be feared they would succeed in their design by the forces they have in India, without any succours from Europe.

BUT it is now time to deliver our opinion without reserve. Whoever surveys the coasts of the Isle of France, must be astonished to see them every where accessible to boats. Though they are surrounded with reefs, there are many bays where troops may be landed under cover of the ships guns.

IN those parts of the island where vessels are obliged to keep further out, the sea is so calm and smooth between the reef and the land, that boats may come up in the night without the least danger.

IF in some places between the reef and the land the water is too shallow for the boats to come ashore, there the troops may land, because the water will not come up to their knees. The sea is so calm between the land and the reefs, that this landing may be effected with the greatest safety. A retreat is more easily

It behoves the court of Versailles to fortify the Isle of France and Pondicherry, if it will have any share in the trade of India.

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ly secured in case of resistance, and the boats will be less exposed while the landing is carried on.

THIS is the true idea we are to frame of the Isle of France; for, if we sometimes meet with a point where a boat cannot land, we are sure of finding an opening at twenty toises to the right or left. The enemy therefore will never attempt to force a landing, unless they are too rash and ignorant of the situation. As it is impossible to guard a coast that measures forty leagues, there will always be some defenceless place fit for landing.

DURING the last war, batteries had been erected all round the island, which, pointing to the sea, could only fire upon ships anchored at a distance or under sail. Some able engineers have discovered that these batteries, erected at a great expence, served no other purpose but to divide the forces; that they would be left without defence, as they were useless; and that they would not resist the fire of the ships, which the best fortifications cannot stand against. They are now abandoned, and nothing has been substituted in their room.

THE harbour on the north-west side is the capital part of the island, and must be the enemy's principal object in their plan for an attack. The nature of the ground will not admit of fortifying it in such a manner as to enable it to stand a siege. This should be secured from a surprise; and a central spot in the internal part of the country should be fortified, from whence, by means of communications properly disposed, the forces of the colony might be sent with expedition to any part where they might be wanted.

WITH such a post of defence as a last resource, the enemy would be obliged to fight a number of battles before the island could be subdued. Neither could this be effected, if the roads cut through the woods,
and

and which lead from the internal parts of the island to the sea-shore, were so artfully contrived as to facilitate the march of the besieged towards the shore, and at the same time to obstruct the progress of the enemy towards the inland parts. The nature of the country will admit of this: it is full of ravines which must be crossed, and of mountains which interrupt the march. It is an easy matter to seize the most advantageous situation.

HOWEVER, there is so necessary and absolute a connection between the Isle of France and Pondicherry, that those two possessions are entirely dependent on each other; for, without the Isle of France, there would be no protection for the settlements in India; and, without Pondicherry, the Isle of France would be exposed to the invasion of the English from Asia as well as from Europe.

THE Isle of France and Pondicherry, when considered as having a necessary and mutual connection, will be a security to one another. Pondicherry will protect the Isle of France, as being the rival of Madras, which the English must always cover with their land and sea forces; and, on the other hand, the Isle of France will always be ready to succour Pondicherry, or to act offensively, as circumstances shall require.

FROM these principles it appears how necessary it is to put Pondicherry immediately in a state of defence. Ever since the year 1764, private interest, that clashes with that of the nation, has made it a matter of doubt which was the best plan of fortification for this important place. Considerable sums have already been expended upon this point, and without any effect, because they have been successively laid out upon contrary systems. It would be needless to dwell

BOOK
IV.

The French being once firmly established in India, will shake off the oppression which the English imposed upon them.

dwelt upon the mischiefs attending these perpetual irresolutions.

WHEN the Isle of France and Pondicherry are once put in a proper posture of defence, trade may then be thought of, which ceased to exist from the moment it became free. Indeed the voyages to China have continued; those to the islands of France and Bourbon have even increased: but, except one or two expeditions, which were owing to particular circumstances, no prudent merchant has sent his property to Malabar, Coromandel, or Bengal; and the few, who have ventured to do it, have been ruined. It could not be otherwise; and yet no inference can be drawn from thence in favour of exclusive privileges.

It may be remembered, that the ruin of the company, which would have happened of itself, was hastened by avarice and animosity. Political views, which had had no share in this event, had not paved the way for the gradual introduction of that public and open trade which was to supply the place of the trade carried on by an exclusive charter. The sudden transition, therefore, from one to the other could not possibly succeed. Before the new system had been adopted, private merchants ought to have been insensibly, and by degrees, employed to continue the commerce in lieu of the company. They should have been instructed how to acquire a thorough knowledge of the several branches of a trade to which they were utter strangers. It would have been necessary to allow them time to form connections in the factories; and to favour and assist them in their first expeditions.

BUT all these precautions would still have been insufficient to insure the success of the French traders in India. It was impossible they should be able to strive

strive against the English, who, being masters of every branch of trade, and in all places, had all the advantages resulting from power, and from the loose principles which prosperity inspires, to enable them to defeat all attempts of this kind. In whatever manner, therefore, or in whatever shape, the trade of France was carried on, it was a necessary consequence of the situation of affairs that it must suffer greatly. It would undoubtedly meet with less opposition, if the court of Versailles were to put the settlements in India in a condition to grant that protection which every sovereign owes to his subjects throughout his dominions. This opposition would still be lessened in a greater degree, if the British ministry would watch over the execution of treaties with that steadiness which justice requires. But this oppression, equally disgraceful to the nation that suffers from it, and to the nation which allows it, can never be effectually removed, but by restoring the balance between them; and unfortunately this can only be done by a war.

FAR be it from us to suggest any idea that would tend to rekindle the flames of discord. Rather let the voice of reason and philosophy be heard by the rulers of the world. May all sovereigns, after so many ages of error, learn to prefer the virtuous glory of making a few men happy, to the mad ambition of reigning over wasted regions, and people groaning under the weight of oppression! May all men become brethren, accustom themselves to consider the universe as one family under the eye of one common father! But these wishes, which are those of every sensible and humane man, will appear as idle dreams to ambitious ministers, who hold the reins of empire. Their busy and restless disposition will still shed torrents of blood.

SOME

SOME pitiful commercial interest will again arm the French and the English. Though Great Britain, in most of her wars, has aimed chiefly at destroying the industry of her neighbours; and though the superiority of her naval forces may still keep up this hope, which has so often been disappointed; we may safely foretell that she would chuse to remove the scene of action from the seas of Asia, where she would have so little to gain, and so much to lose. That power is not ignorant of the secret wishes formed on all sides for the overthrow of an edifice, which eclipses all the rest. The subah of Bengal is secretly exasperated that he has not even the appearance of authority left. The subah of the Decan is inconsolable to see his commerce under the controul of a foreign power. The nabob of Arcot endeavours to dispel the jealousies of his tyrants. The Marattas are exasperated to find nothing but obstacles to their depredations. All the powers in those parts, either are actually enslaved, or think themselves on the eve of being so. England, we may presume, would not wish to see the French at the head of such a confederacy. On the contrary, we may venture to foretell that a strict neutrality for India would be the wisest plan they could pursue, and one they would most readily adopt.

BUT would this system be as eligible for their rivals? Certainly not. The French are aware, that warlike preparations made at the Isle of France might be employed with advantage; that the conquests of the English are too extensive not to be open to attacks; and that, since their experienced officers are returned home, the British possessions in Indostan are only guarded by young people, who are more intent upon making their fortunes than upon military exercises. It is, therefore, to be presumed, that a warlike nation

nation would eagerly seize an opportunity of repairing their former misfortunes. At the sight of their standards, all these oppressed sovereigns would take the field; and the rulers of India, surrounded with enemies, and attacked at once on the north and on the south, by sea and by land, would infallibly be overpowered.

THEN the French, considered as the deliverers of Indostan, would emerge from that state of humiliation into which their own misconduct hath plunged them. They would become the idols of the princes and people of Asia, provided the revolution they brought about proved to them a lesson of moderation. Their trade would be extensive and flourishing, so long as they knew how to be just. But this prosperity would end in some fatal catastrophe, should an inordinate ambition prompt them to plunder, ravage, and oppress. To give stability to their situation, they must even, by noble and generous proceedings, oblige their rivals to overlook their advantages. No great degree of magnanimity will be requisite, patiently to view the operations of the northern nations of Europe in the seas of Asia.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



